

COUNTRY LIFE

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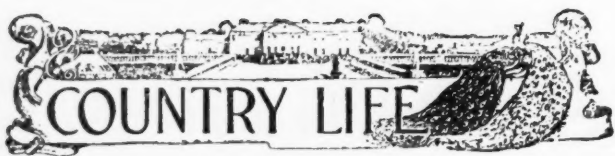
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SPEAIGHT.

LADY URSULA GROSVENOR.

157, New Bond Street, W.



THE Journal for all interested in

Country Life and Country Pursuits

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THE INCOME-TAX

IT may be said at once that the report of the Select Committee on the Income-tax which has just been printed by order of the House of Commons does not go to the root of the matter. The excuse is put forward that the business of the Committee was only to consider practical measures, and so they considered themselves debarred from dealing with questions of expediency and extent. Thus the discussion of principle is carefully avoided, and this in our opinion means the exclusion of the most interesting aspect of the question. Modern economists could undertake no task likely to be more helpful to their countrymen than an examination of the comparative merits of direct and indirect taxation. The evils of the former are almost too well known to require enumeration. The assessment depends in the first instance on a system of inquisition which is so displeasing to Englishmen that one can hardly understand why it has been endured for so long. Again, if a protest be made against the levy of the surveyor of taxes, whose information in a large number of cases cannot possibly be correct, it leads to the discussion of a man's private affairs before his neighbours, and in many instances before his rivals and competitors in business. Thus innumerable instances can be quoted of taxpayers preferring to pay an outrageous charge rather than disclose the secrets of their trade to those who might possibly take advantage of them. We take one example, in the proprietor of a struggling school, who was trying all he could to turn a losing concern into a profitable one. He was assessed at a considerable amount, but he knew well that if he objected he would have to set his case before a number of tradesmen who supplied the school.

We know very well that the habit of the world is to kick a man when he is down. Everyone must carry a brave face in adversity if he desires to reach affluence. This example is typical of many others, and illustrates a very definite grievance against the income-tax. It is only one of many others. The system forces officials of the Government to take means of doubtful legitimacy to ascertain the earnings of their unfortunate victims. Nor is it possible in the end that they can arrive absolutely at the value of an income. One

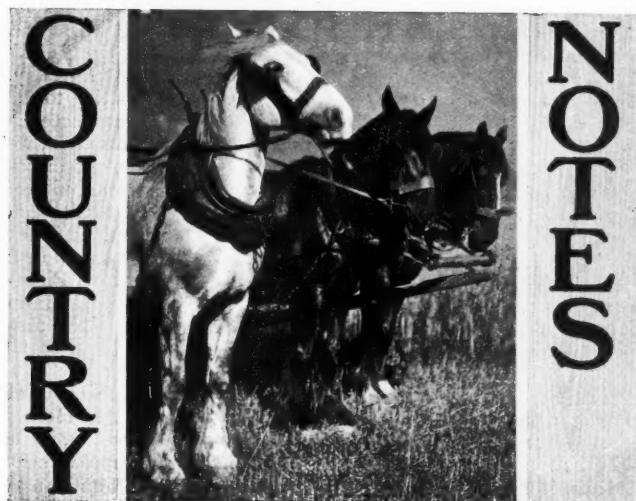
of the very worst features of the income-tax is that, while its collection harasses the man of honour and honesty, it does not prevent less scrupulous individuals from evading it. Something, of course, can be done by extending the method which the Committee describes as collection at the sources. In the case of many institutions, such as banks and limited liability companies, the custom prevails of docking the salary or interest of its share of income-tax before payment is made. But this, too, leads to injustice, as in thousands of cases shareholders who are not really liable to pay what is taken off their dividends do not know that they are in a position to claim an abatement successfully. If the working classes had been subject to the worry and trouble caused to those in a better position by the income-tax, the agitation against it would very speedily have led to its abolition, and there are few statesmen who at heart believe that this is a good way of raising the revenue. Mr. Gladstone was perfectly sincere in his desire to abolish it in 1874, and over and over again Chancellors of the Exchequer, considering the high rate of the income-tax in times of peace, have mourned the fact that they have no other resources in times of war. Few would doubt the proposition that if exacted at all it should be kept in reserve for times of great national emergency.

However, it would be idle to discuss general principles in connection with the report now before us. The questions that the Committee seriously discussed are those of graduation and differentiation and the bearing of the death duties on graduation and differentiation. To take them in their order, what had to be considered was that the income-tax is already graduated by abatement in the case of incomes not exceeding £700 a year. An extension of this system is considered practicable by the Committee, only it cannot be applied to all incomes from the highest to the lowest with satisfactory results. If the whole of the tax were collected on a personal declaration the process of graduation would be simple in the extreme; but the Committee are very rightly extremely reluctant to abandon collection at the source, as this is, at all events, a sure way of arriving at certain results. Again they say that "direct personal assessment for the whole tax is not practicable in this country in the sense of being an expedient or desirable means of collecting the revenue." The alternative suggestion is the setting up of a super-tax—that is, "a second income-tax, distinct from and supplementary to the existing tax, to be levied on individuals by direct personal assessment." A difficulty in the way is the unwillingness of people with a large income to declare it when the object for the declaration is that an additional tax should be levied upon them. The question of earned and unearned incomes is considered at very considerable length, but in practice it has been found difficult to establish a proper difference between the two classes. "Permanent" and "precarious" are misleading words. For example, an income derived from investments in stocks and shares, though it might come under the term "permanent," would not do so in all cases; in fact, many of these incomes are truly precarious. The phrase "personal effort" also provides a stumbling-block. For instance, when a private business is turned into a company it sometimes happens that the original owner remains the largest shareholder in the company. In some instances he retires from business, and in that case his income would be described as an investment. In another case he works harder than ever, and, therefore, his income may be described in the truest sense of the word as "earned" without his having any way of getting over this confession. Another example might be taken from the owner of a landed estate. It is easy to assume, as many people do, that the income derived from such a property is inherited and not earned; but in many cases this would not hold at all true any more than it would of an inherited business. Numbers of those to whom a great business has been handed down from their forefathers have had to struggle with might and main to keep it going, and to say that their income is unearned is absurd; but many a landed estate engages the whole of the attention and energy of the proprietor, and it would be equally false to say that such income as he derives from it is unearned. It is difficult to agree with the Committee's statement that the differentiation between earned and unearned incomes is practicable; nor are we able to endorse the other conclusion that compulsory personal declaration from each individual of his total net income in respect of which tax is payable is expedient. On the contrary, we believe that any such provision would be keenly resented.

Our Portrait Illustration.

OUR frontispiece this week is a portrait of Lady Ursula Grosvenor, the little daughter of the Duke and Duchess of Westminster.

* * * It is particularly requested that no permissions to photograph houses, gardens, or livestock on behalf of COUNTRY LIFE be granted except when direct application is made from the offices of the paper. When such requests are received, the Editor would esteem the kindness of readers if they would forward the correspondence at once to him.



A VERY interesting report has been issued by the Select Committee appointed by the House of Commons last session to enquire into rural housing and public health administration. It recommends what we have often suggested in these columns, viz., that these matters could be attended to much more efficiently by the County Council. The experiment of leaving a small local authority to appoint officials who have the administration of certain very intricate Acts to attend to has not been a success. In the case of the Building Bye-laws the result has been to limit building to a very great extent, and to cause such houses as have been put up to be the very opposite of satisfactory. The County Council is a sufficiently large and representative body to overcome the difficulty. To put the appointments in its hands would certainly be a step towards centralisation, but in this case centralisation is much more desirable than devolution. Many well-known evils could be got rid of by the change which has been suggested.

The obituary of the week contains two names at least that deserve passing note. One is that of Miss Agnes Mary Clerke, who died on Sunday morning at the age of sixty-four. She was one of the few women who had become really eminent in astronomy. She was elected a member of the Royal Astronomical Society after the publication of her important work "Problems in Astrophysics." She had written many other valuable astronomical works, and her name is likely to hold a distinguished place in the annals of the science. Only two other women before her had received a similar honour from the Royal Astronomical Society—Caroline Herschell and Mrs. Somerville. Mr. B. Fletcher Robinson belonged to an exceedingly clever family, and was a young and promising journalist who has been cut off at the early age of thirty-six. Recently he had been editor of the *World*, and previously to that he had conducted *Vanity Fair*, and had been day editor of the *Express*. He was a light and versatile writer, who appeared to have a fine future before him.

An interesting piece of information has been forwarded to us by the editor of the *Church Family Newspaper*. This journal quoted from an article in *COUNTRY LIFE* on the ancient carved bench-ends in the parish church of Ufford, Northants, and added a request to its readers to furnish particulars of similar carvings elsewhere. In response to this enquiry the Rev. William Martin, rector of Great Brington, Northants, writes to our contemporary describing the bench-ends of his own church. He says, "The small figures with protruding tongues which you mention are twice found. Another interesting end represents in rough carving the Virgin and Child treading on a dragon. Another also has a curious carving supposed to be an attempt to represent a cherubic figure with wings. Most of the seat-ends have coats of arms of the old families connected with the parish, and emblems, such as the cross with nails and crown of thorns, hands uplifting a heart (*sursum corda*), chalices, bunches of grapes and numerous others. The seats are of the fifteenth century, made of thick oak, and when I came to the parish they were practically unusable, as they were very narrow and sloped downwards." We shall be glad at any time to have particulars from our readers of what is old and rare in the churches they know.

The preliminary report of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland regarding the excavation of the newly-discovered Roman military station at Newstead, Melrose, describes an unusually successful exploration. The foundations have been traced of the largest station yet found in Scotland. It is strongly defended by a rampart of earth 40ft. thick, a wall 7½ft. thick and three parallel lines of ditches. Among the "finds" is a bronze

ewer 11in. high, with a beautiful handle terminating above in a lotus bud, with arms shaped like long-beaked birds grasping the rim, and below is a Bacchanal head wreathed with ivy tendrils. The type is said to be well known in Pompeii, and belongs to the first century. There are also two Samian ware bowls, one bearing the stamp of Cinnamus, a potter of Leonx in the Antonine period. There seems a strange new interest attached to the stamp of a well-known potter in classical times whose wares are found lying near fair Melrose. Many articles of leather are also found, such as boots and shoes, an iron helmet with face mask, the headpiece embossed with locks of curling hair; a richly-embossed brass helmet, bronze armour and bronze plates with names scratched on the inner side. There are as well numbers of swords, spear heads, axes, scythes, chariot wheels, etc. It is an excavation altogether of the greatest interest, and the society look forward to still greater results if funds are forthcoming.

THE EARLY YEAR.

Babble a little, baby year,
Though the winds would lull you to sleep;
Talk to me just a while, my dear,
Out in the woodlands deep,
Where the misty sunset dies a-gleaming,
And soon you will be dreaming, dreaming.
Prattle a little of this old earth,
Mother of you and of me,
And the toys and joys that are coming to birth
In the wonderful days to be,
When the grass springs up and buds are breaking,
And you will be waking, awaking.
Babble a little, baby year;
But your voice is lisping and low,
And instead of the tales that I wish to hear
Comes a voice of the long ago—
Of old dead leaves and old suns' setting,
And things that I was forgetting, forgetting.
You cannot talk yet, baby year;
Perhaps you will speak to me soon.
The glow has gone and the moon is clear,
And the old winds dreamily croon;
And the fretful thoughts in my heart are leaping
Just when they ought to be sleeping, sleeping.

ARTHUR L. SALMON.

Collisions between the hunting and shooting interests are not unheard of in this country. Not often, however, does hunting clash with shooting and fishing as it has done in France. In one case a man out shooting knocked over a fine stag that had been driven towards him by the Comte de Brigode's hounds. The Hunt came up and took possession of the dead ten-pointer, but, as a sequel, the marksman has recovered a sum equivalent to £6 in the law courts. A yet rarer encounter between hunting-folk and fishermen occurred near Bonnebault many years ago, in the course of which a wild boar, running before hounds, plunged into the river which runs along the edge of the forest of Brotonne and got entangled in the nets of some shad-fishermen close by. The Master claimed the boar, and the fishermen argued that but for their nets it would have gone away down stream. In the end the lucky fishermen were paid the amount realised by the largest fish caught by them that season, a matter of nearly £4. The poaching cat is an animal of lively interest in all preserved countries, and the law on the subject is a little obscure. It is interesting, therefore, to read the judgment given early in January at Boubourg, in which the judge disallowed a claim for damages on the part of the owner of a cat that was shot by a sportsman in a ditch bordering the high road 400yds. from the nearest house. The finding, though perfectly satisfactory to sportsmen in the neighbourhood, was based on the quaint argument that, so far from a habitation and so near the woods, the sportsman might easily have mistaken the cat for a rabbit!

The French protect their partridges more than a fortnight earlier than we do, the close time dating from January 13th. Hares are also protected from the same date, for in France the hare is still regarded as an asset of sport, and not merely as vermin of the farm. A high Parisian official of the Department concerned with the victualling of the French capital has complained bitterly to the Minister of Agriculture touching what he regards as excessive protection of partridges; but the Minister has just declined to curtail the close time. The argument used by our neighbours, who do very little driving save on one or two large estates, is that, as partridges cannot be got at with dogs so late in the season, sportsmen have no reason to rebel against a close time that checks only the nefarious practices of poachers.

Another bird, not commonly regarded in this country as an object of sport, but extensively shot on the other side of the Channel, is the lark. The method commonly employed is that of the well-known "lark mirror," a revolving mirror which throws back the sun's rays in a manner that attracts these little song-birds and makes them a peculiarly easy mark for guns posted in hiding close by. Great, however, as is the destruction—at any rate, during the sunny months—by this means, it is nothing to the wholesale slaughter achieved by a kind of lark-fishing, which is peculiarly deadly in December, a month in which the mirror is more or less *hors de combat*. An immense longline, as we may call it, with from 1,500 to 5,000 snoods, each terminating in a horsehair loop, is cunningly laid just before sunrise in a field likely to be frequented by thousands of hungry larks, and grain is scattered over it. When in the evening the owner visits his springes, like an Indian trapper, it is not uncommon for him to pick up a couple of hundred dozen larks, and other small birds besides. An influential movement is now afoot to put a stop to this atrocious massacre, not, as we should do it in this country, with a view to sparing a treasured song-bird, but rather in the interests of sportsmen who want larks left to shoot with the mirror.

The speed skaters of the Fen Country suffered a very severe disappointment at the time of the Christmastide cold snap. Although the frost was severe, so much snow fell with it that the ice was quite unfit for their races, and it went so quickly that there was no chance of sweeping the ice free for the long course which the great skating contests demand. At the moment of writing, they are again in good hopes with a frost which looks like lasting. There is a peculiar interest in these contests, both on account of the style of skating and the characteristics of the competitors. The man who lives in the Fenland will not admit that his country, flat though it is, is uninteresting. It is certain that, if it has not all or any of the beauty which modern taste associates with an undulating land, it has a character of its own which is not without attraction, and the atmospheric effects are particularly fine. But whatever it may be now from the æsthetic point of view, from its historical association it is full of interest, and its people keep a character of their own less influenced by conquest and invasion than the natives of any other part of our island. The old nature of the fens, islets and channels alternating enabled their inhabitants to elude the attacks of assailants accustomed either to a more solid earth or a more consistently fluid sea. It seems that prior to the extensive draining which was effected in the Stuarts' reign, the relatively small ships of that date could sail right up the channels to the verge of the present upland.

During the centuries that the fens have been cultivated there are three distinct layers of finest *débris* which have been delved by the plough. The present soil indicates that it was formed at a time when the land was covered with a good wood of oaks. Above that a former generation used to work a soil composed of a waste and deposit of willows, and the oldest layer of all (and this is a very singular fact, if it be correctly reported, considering how comparatively lately the tree is thought to have been introduced into the southern parts of our island) is composed of the decay of Scotch fir forest. It is perhaps more likely that some other conifer was the origin of this stratum. About these forest layers there is one feature common to all three—that all the stems are found lying in a direction pointing towards London, apparently indicating that each in its turn had fallen to the eruption of a great tidal wave from the North Sea.

A timely leaflet has been issued by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries directing the attention of farmers to the necessity of cleaning the channels and water-courses of streams running through their land. The writer, in order to enforce his warning, lays down the law on the subject. According to common law the occupier of land through which a water-course runs is not as a rule under any obligation to neighbours whose lands drain into that water-course to prevent or remove any obstruction of the outfall due to merely natural causes. Yet, in exceptional cases, for example, under an enclosure award, such obligation may exist. A statutory remedy is, however, provided by the Land Drainage Act of 1847. The duty, therefore, only arises on notice being given by the person injured. If an occupier fails to perform his share of maintaining the banks or cleansing and scouring the channels of existing drains the proprietor or occupier of any land thereby injured may serve a notice on the offender. Should this be neglected the occupier of the injured land may himself carry out the necessary work, and the cost of the same or a just proportion of it must be paid by the neglecting occupier. Payment may be enforced by an order of justices.

In the forthcoming sale by auction of the celebrated Daniel Lambert public-house on Ludgate Hill, the name of the "most corpulent man of whom authentic record exists" is again to the fore, after a lapse of 101 years. A contemporary notice of him informs us that when about thirty-six years of age he

attained to over 49st., being " $\frac{1}{2}$ a hundredweight heavier than the celebrated Bright of Maldon, in Essex, whose waistcoat was so capacious that seven men might be buttoned up in it." Lambert drank only water, and slept less than eight hours a day. Born at Leicester in 1770, he started life as apprentice to the engraved-button trade in Birmingham. In 1791 he succeeded his father as keeper of Leicester Gaol, in which situation, we read, "Mr. Lambert evinces a humane and benevolent disposition." In 1805 he retired from this post with an annuity of £50 a year, and in the following year he began to turn his bulk to fame. He had a special carriage constructed and exhibited himself in London, being advertised in the newspapers as follows: "Mr. Lambert will see company at his house, No. 53, Piccadilly, next the Albany, nearly opposite St. James's Church, from 11 to 5 o'clock. Tickets of admission 1s. each." He also toured the provinces.

At Stamford he is recorded to have "attained the acme of mortal hugeness," and here he died, at the Waggon and Horses Inn, July 21st, 1809. He then weighed 52 $\frac{3}{4}$ st. His coffin, made out of 112 superficial feet of elm, was built on axle trees and wheels. At King's Lynn Museum a waistcoat belonging to him is preserved, 102in. in girth. Notwithstanding Daniel's colossal bulk, he was, we are told, well proportioned, and his face was manly and intelligent. He was possessed, moreover, of a quick wit. In his earlier days he was very active in field sports, and was noted as an excellent swimmer and a celebrated "feeder" of cocks. He has attained an illusive literary fame at the hands of Mr. George Meredith, who, in "One of Our Conquerors," writes of London as "the Daniel Lambert of Cities."

THE LONELY SWAN.

I saw a swan slow sailing with the tide,
That turned and craned his neck in discontent,
Then beat the flood with great wings flapping wide,
And strong black feet the calm reflections rent.
With mighty strokes he gained his solid flight
And left the waters whirling in dismay;
Then as he faded out beyond my sight
The fretful ripples soothed their disarray.

SYBIL BLUNT.

A step in the right direction has been taken by the Home Office in their new regulations with regard to hansom cabs. They authorise the taximeter, but do not render it compulsory. The most significant of the new regulations is that which regularises a fare of sixpence per mile or for twelve minutes' driving. The cabmen themselves ought to welcome this change, as it has long been a grievance with them that, owing to the multiplication of other means of transport, they are not patronised as freely as used to be the case. A man who can be whirled from one part of London to another for a penny or two in a "tube" or on a motor-omnibus hesitates about employing a cab at the pre-ent rates; but no doubt if there were a reduction, the hansom, which is so much more comfortable than any other conveyance, would continue to attract a fair amount of patronage.

Mr. Eustace Miles has been writing about the unwisdom, from the point of view of the general physique, of the "strong man" kind of training or exercise which has for its main result an increase in the size of the biceps and an enhanced power, which is not often useful, of lifting great weights. In other respects, as he rightly urges, this training sacrifices quickness to a valueless solidity. In the course of his comments he makes a point which might receive a good deal more attention than it does. He says that the boy who has not a sufficiently good eye to take an interesting part in games is the one who is commonly attracted by this brute strength culture. There is not the least doubt that such a boy as this, whose hand and eye do not work together in the ready way needed for success in nearly all school games, has a "bad time" of it. There is little to interest him; athletic sports, as we call them, grow rather weary with repetition. The boy without an eye, in fact—using the term in its well-understood sense—is apt to be rather at a loose end. It would be a great boon to many such a one if an interesting school game could be invented which would not essentially require this correspondence of hand and eye. Would jiu-jitsu, perchance, go a little way to fill the want?

The recent meeting of the Northumberland Sea Fisheries Committee at Newcastle discussed several interesting items. The humble crab has attained greater prominence among the creatures of the deep since Professor Meek established the facts of its migration; and one was mentioned which had been marked and liberated at Craster, forty miles south on the Northumbrian Coast in October, 1905, and had now been caught as far north as Cockburnspath on the Berwickshire Coast. The reported illegal packing and consigning of the white-laced or watery crabs was

discussed, and it was suggested that a very necessary law should be passed to institute a close time for crabs. This has long been mooted at the different centres of crab-catching, and as the shell-fish is being found in lessening numbers something might surely be done.

A correspondent writes: "The dispute about the advisability of children under five attending school continues to go on, and feeling in country districts among local bodies runs very high. The various opinions are very strongly held, and the question is not one which will be easily settled. The case of one town in the North may be specially referred to. A few years ago the ratepayers erected an infant school at which 299 children under five attend. The passing of a law prohibiting their attendance will naturally be a source of great discontent; possibly half the ratepayers in a small country town send their children to such a school. The majority seem in favour of the law standing where it is. The school accommodation is ample. There are already 220 vacant places, taking the children as a whole, and if 299

were excluded the loss would be great. Of these 299 there are 80 under the age of four. The grant earned by children under five is over £500 in this particular locality.

"It was agreed by the committee that the benefit to children and parents alike was so great that no change would be made in the present arrangements. The children under five like to come to school. There is neither mental nor physical stress put upon them; they are taken off the streets and taught cleanly habits and good manners. In many cases it is shown that the married women go out to work, even with large families; and in the case of the fisher-women they have so much to do both with their housework and assisting their husbands in their work that the children could not possibly be looked after at home. Parental responsibility is not being removed, but the children as a national asset are being guarded and trained and the overworked parents relieved for a few hours every day. In a district where large families prevail the movement to prevent children under five attending school would produce great discomfort."

CORSHAM HOSPITAL IN WILTSHIRE.

CORSHAM is in that North Wiltshire country which has yet to have its history written. It is a large parish and town between Chippenham and Bath, and was in old time a manor of the royal Cornwalls. Leland, the first of English antiquaries, saw it when he travelled the land at the cost of Henry VIII. "I left Chippenham a mile on the left hand," he writes, "and so went

No vengeance by private feud or process of law followed the crime. Charles Danvers lived to go to the scaffold for the Essex Rebellion, and Henry, who had been Sir Philip Sidney's boy page at Zutphen, to be a peer, his many years and honours being recited on his tomb. Ten years after this deliberate murder the law had made him clear of all the consequences of his act. Dodson and Fogg to aid, he had sued out a "writ of error," not traversing any



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FROM THE HIGH ROAD.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

to Allington village about a mile off, and thence three miles to Corsham, a good uplandish town, where the ruins of an old manor place, and thereby a park went to be in dowage to the Queens of England." Old Mr. Bonham told the wandering clerk that Corsham once appertained to the Earls of Cornwall, who lay at its mansion place, and from him or others Leland heard the tale of the freeing of Corsham, how all the men of this hamlet were bondmen, and how an Earl of Cornwall hearing them secretly lamenting their lot made them free for a money payment. All this did Leland hear and note before he rode on past the hermitage on the hill and down into the vale of Haselbury.

It is a place which has made little history. Queen Anne's physician was born a Corsham boy, and Hasted the antiquary found his last harbour here. Corsham's great event was perhaps the murder done here in 1594, when young Sir Henry Danvers and his brother Sir Charles, with a score of their tenants, burst in an inn room where Harry Long, a Wiltshire gentleman, was sitting at meat with his friends. No altercation is reported, no cause of quarrel is known, but Danvers made straight for Long with his dag or pistol, and shot him dead with a ball through the left breast.

evidence of the murder, but attacking in detail the language of the coroner's presentment. He could not deny that he had given Long a death wound in the breast, but he could at least point out that the presentment in coroner's Latin had spelled *mammilla* (the breast) with two m's instead of three. *Faux Latin ne quashera inditement*, replied the court in amazing French and with a gleam of good sense yet more amazing. But when Sir Henry further pleaded that although he had indeed discharged his "engine called a dagge worth 6s. 8d. charged with powder and lead" in and upon poor Harry Long, inflicting a mortal wound, yet the words *percussit eum* (he struck him) had been omitted, although commonly used in indictments. Here the court wavered; it thought *percussit eum* should have been set down by the coroner, and Sir Henry Danvers (Lord Danvers) walked out discharged, an outlaw whose outlawry was reversed.

Corsham is notable for the number of good houses within its boundary, chief among them being the house of Corsham Court, the Elizabethan seat of the Lord Methuen of Corsham, with its famous picture gallery, its park and lake—Lord Methuen is lord of the old royal manor of Corsham, whose tenants, free as

Leland found them, still choose their bailiff, who has the power of a coroner within the manor. The church is ancient, but has suffered from wanton and destructive restoration, George Edmund Street, over-persuaded by an ignorant restoration committee, having pulled down the old tower that stood in the midst of the church, building a new one on the south side. There remains, then, of noteworthy Corsham buildings the old almshouse of our pictures.

Hungerford's is that shield of bars and roundels over its door. Another, an older and greater foundation of these same Hungerfords, exists at Heytesbury, beyond Warminster, in this county, where is the almshouse built by Margaret Lady Hungerford, the heir of Botreaux, in the days of Edward IV. "A great season of adversity," as the poor dame moans in her

will, having seen husband and son in the field for the Red Rose. When two centuries later another Hungerford widow turned in her old age to the solace of good works, Margaret Hungerford's deed may well have put it in her mind to build Corsham Hospital. The Hungerfords of Farleigh, a family established by one who had John of Gaunt for a patron, were in the seventeenth century no longer among the barons of the realm; but their stately castle of Farleigh in Somerset reminded their neighbours of their former estate. Sir Anthony Hungerford of Black Bourton brought Farleigh into his line by marriage with a cousin. His mother, Bridget Shelley from Sussex, had brought him up as a devout Romanist, but she lived to receive his dedication of controversial letters from the standpoint of the English Church. A man loving controversy, Sir Anthony was, indeed, a breeder





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TWO OF THE GABLES.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

of dispute, for by his two wives he begat two sons, who faced each other on the benches of the Short Parliament and the Long Parliament, the one a leader against the King, the other a Cavalier captain imprisoned for loyalty. One Corsham foundress was wife of the parliamentarian. He, a Knight of the Bath at the coronation of King Charles, was the King's bitter enemy in Wiltshire and Somerset. This was the Sir Edward Hungerford who occupied Salisbury with his troops, who leaguered and took Wardour Castle and his own ancestral hold at Farleigh. He died before his sovereign, or a Hungerford name and seal might have been added to the warrant which gave the King to the headsman.

Margaret Hungerford was probably a partner in her husband's policy. She was a rich citizen's daughter, and London was, at her birth, a stronghold of those who were to be called Puritans. Her father, William Halliday, an alderman in 1618, was a merchant who became rich through his East India ventures. His cousin, Sir Leonard Halliday, was that Lord

Mayor whom Stowe praises for having made a garden out of Moorfields, which, before his time, was "a very lay stall." Both of them claimed as ancestor the Waiter Halliday whom Edward IV. maintained as his royal minstrel and Master of the Revels. William Halliday's monument, with busts of himself, his wife Susan and his elder daughter, was set up in 1624 in the church of St. Laurence Jewry, its inscription calling him a worthy magistrate, deserving immortal fame for his piety, charity and prudence. His prudence is avouched by his will, for he could give a portion of £14,000 to each of his two daughters. Both were already married, the younger to Edward Hungerford, the elder to Sir Henry Mildmay, then a King's favourite, and a server in his Royal household. Royalty itself made the match for its servant, and, with his wife's dowry in hand, Sir Henry was able to buy Wanstead House in Essex, and to entertain his King there after the lavish fashion that our old sovereigns loved. But this courtier deserted the Court in the troubles of 1641, and sat as one of the

regicide judges. His name is not on the warrant, but he was unforgotten at the Restoration. The Parliament had continued him in his office of Keeper of the Crown Jewels and Robes, and Henry Mildmay cut a sad figure before Charles II.'s Reception Committee when ordered to account for crowns and sceptres which had long ago left his hands. Then came up the blacker offence, and, although the regicide's interest at Court brought him off alive, his sentence was a savage one, full of that boyish vindictiveness which characterised the first legal revenges of the restored Cavaliers. He was degraded from his rank and title, ordered to imprisonment for life, and tagged to the sentence was another—that every anniversary of the King's condemnation should see him dragged on a sledge from the Tower to Tyburn gallows, a rope about his neck. About four years afterwards it was decided that his captivity should be at Tangier; but death came to him in Antwerp port on his journey. As he lay dead, a curious friend brought in a Dutch painter and bade him paint the dead man's likeness, as an answer to those who held that none of the murderers of the Lord's Anointed could ever die in his bed.

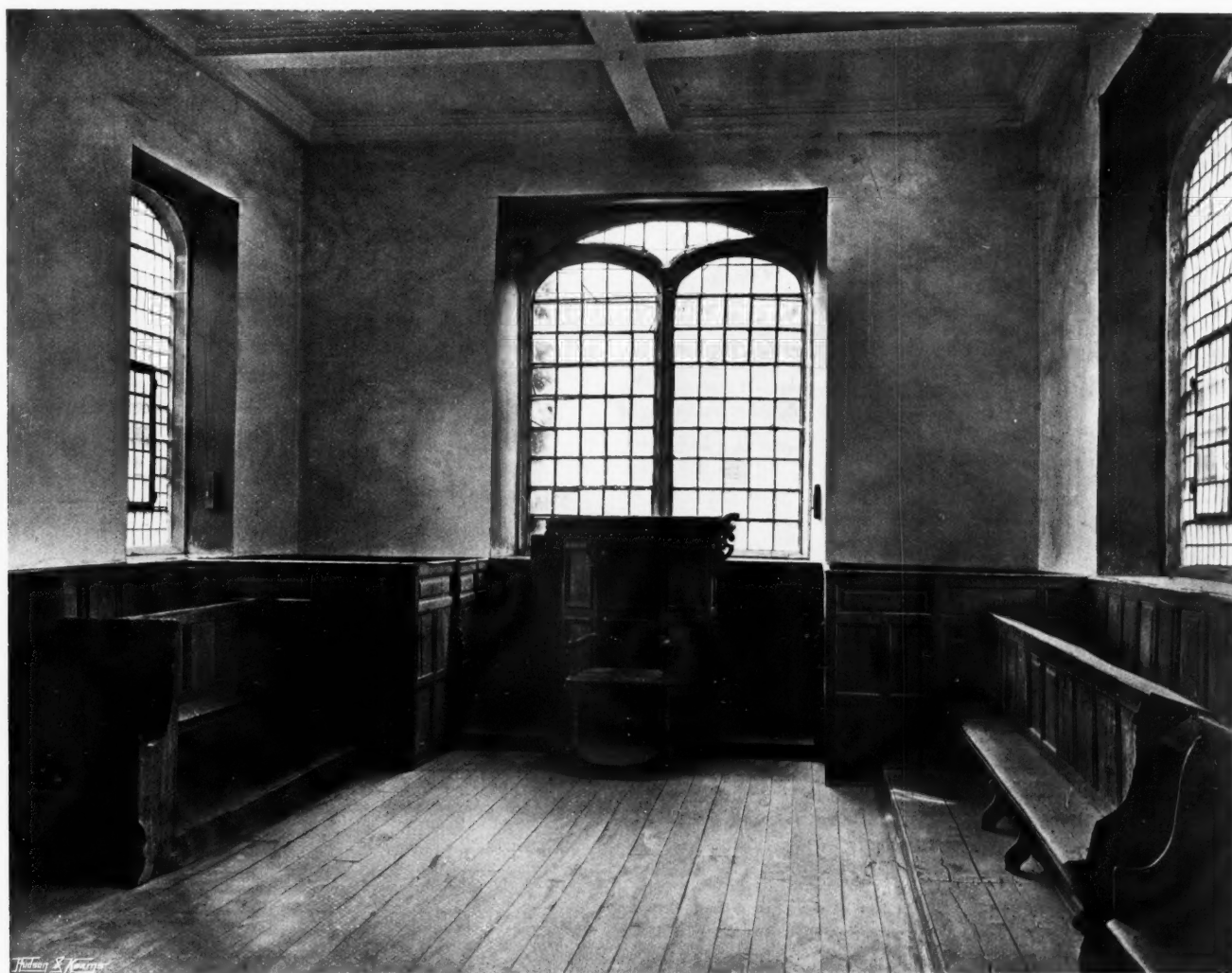
Sir Edward Hungerford, by his earlier death, was spared all such Restoration reckonings, and his widow lived unmolested at Corsham, her husband having given the reversion of his estate to the son of his brother the Cavalier, who in the end wasted and lost all. Of her quiet life we may recover two strange tales. For the one we may thank Sharington Talbot, a Wiltshire squire, who, in a letter dated 1666, relates a Corsham wonder. In Lady Hungerford's house there a certain room had been cleaned and shut up for the night. Morning came, and there on the bare floor was painted a picture in colours of my lady, drawn to the life. What this might betoken none could say; but my lady would not have the figure rubbed out, slighting the portent. Be it noted, however, that she had since fallen in a hectic fever. The second event was the great fire in Durham Yard, where Lady Hungerford had her town house. She came up from Wiltshire on an April Monday in 1669 to find smoke and ruin. A maid who had gone to a cupboard to fetch a tallow dip from the bunch, having no knife with her, burned one off with the candle in her hand, and left a spark of fire among the rest. Hungerford House was never rebuilt; but, long after his aunt's death, Sir Edward Hungerford, the nephew, for the mending of

his broken fortunes, built on the site the Hungerford Market of our fathers, which in turn made way for Charing Cross Station. Old-fashioned London keeps its memory by recognising the foot-bridge at Charing Cross as Hungerford Bridge. The year before this fire Lady Hungerford had built her house of charity at Corsham. Six aged folk and a master were to dwell there, having lodging and £5 a year each poor person. The master had £30 a year, and such good quarters that Edward Hasted, the historian of Kent, an Eton and Lincoln's Inn man, F.R.S. and F.S.A., confessed that here was a "most desirable asylum" before he died master of the hospital in 1812. A free school was attached; but that has since been abandoned, and the college peace is no longer broken by village children. The college resembles no whit those almshouses of the Restoration age which sprang up nearer London. Lonely Corsham in the West held by the old ways, and the hospital, with its mullioned windows and dripstones, is a fort held for the dead cause of the old Gothic work. Wiltshire has nothing more fanciful than its irregular dormer gables seen through the screen of oft-pollarded trees, than the overhanging lines of its storeys. The old folks' quarters are planned like the cells of monks, the long pent-house cloister at the back opening not into a common garden or quad, but into a row of little walled gardens, one for each dweller. The chapel has a pulpit set Puritan-fashion where we should look for an altar, a pulpit whose front makes a back for an arm-chair in which the master can sit in consistory and judge his little company. An oaken band is the pulpit's candlestick. Pulpit and benches abut the wall, the oak gallery with its carved front, pilasters and shields of arms, are all as Dame Margaret left them when, in 1673, she was carried to the Farleigh Chapel to lie beside her husband in one of those hideous and mummy-like leaden coffins affected by dead Hungerfords of Farleigh.

On two sides the hospital bears her memorial, an inscription which runs:

THIS FREESCHOOLE AND ALMESHUSE WAS FOUNDEN AND ENDOWED BY THE LADY MARGARET HUNGERFORD, RELICT OF S^R EDW: HUNGERFORD, KNT OF THE HON: ORDER OF THE BATH, DAUGHTER AND COHEIRE OF WILL: HALLIDAY, ALDERMAN OF LONDON AND SUSAN HIS WIFE, DAUGHTER OF S^R HENRY ROW KNT AND ALDERMAN AND LORD MAIOR OF LONDON.





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PULPIT IN THE CHAPEL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

The great achievement of arms over this has the shield, helm and crest, not of Sir Edward Hungerford, but of William Halliday. Higher up on the wall is the Hungerford crest—the sickles and sheaf—and the Halliday crest repeated, while above all is a little oval shield of Hungerford. The antick fashion of the walls and the important place given to the father's arms suggest that he was, perhaps, the beginner of this building which his daughter dedicated to charity.

A BOOK OF THE WEEK.

THOSE English readers who desire some guidance in their study of French literature cannot do better than watch the development of the series of French Men of Letters, which is being edited by Dr. Alexander Jessup.

The first of the set was a study of Montaigne by Professor Dowden, and the second to appear is *Honoré De Balzac* (Lippincott), by the late M. Ferdinand Brunetière. This author was exceptionally well qualified to write about Balzac. He was the editor of the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, and had won a great name for himself as a literary critic, particularly as a warm partisan of the realistic school of novelists. Of these the greatest was undoubtedly Balzac. Before he appeared it seemed as though the historical novel, as written by Alexandre Dumas, was going to carry the world before it, and M. Brunetière commences his fascinating study by analysing the history of the novel up to 1819. For practical purposes we may date its origin from the issue of "Don Quixote." This was followed in French by the "Gil Blas" of Le Sage, which is properly described as a picaresque novel. Le Sage set his hero wandering over Spain, and produced an inimitable picture of life as expressed in various grades of society. He had as contemporary Coutilz de Sandras, a man of very inferior capacity, but to whom belongs the merit of having originated those three characters rendered immortal by Dumas—Athos, Aramis and Porthos. M. Brunetière, however, is mostly engaged in setting forth the development of that kind of novel which is so personal in its character as almost to be called a revelation. In England we had Defoe writing "Robinson Crusoe," a tale so true to life that in reading it one is constantly deluded into the belief that it is the record of actual adventures. Dean Swift chose the same

form for his "Gulliver's Travels." In "Gulliver," no doubt, the ultimate aim was political, and the author sought to achieve his ends by satire; but, in addition to being a thinker and reformer, Swift was also one of the most finished literary artists of his time, and therefore selected the form by means of which he could most easily produce the illusion of reality. In France at the same time Abbé Prévost was producing among other things the wonderful personal narrative of "Manon Lescaut," perhaps the most passionate of all French novels. As the critic points out, all the novels of Prévost and Marivaux are personal narratives. "I was there; such a thing happened to me." In England the tradition was carried on by Richardson, who used the skill he had acquired in writing love letters for ignorant girls to construct "Clarissa Harlowe" by means of correspondence. M. Brunetière omits to mention that this performance was watched with enjoyment by the mocking eyes of Henry Fielding, who, discarding the personal style, wrote "Joseph Andrews," originally intended as a burlesque of Richardson, but which, under the genius of this author, developed into a masterpiece of English prose. The French writers, however, did not feel the same sympathy with Fielding that they did with Richardson, and, though we have "La Nouvelle Héloïse," again written in letters by Rousseau, it is pointed out with perfect justice by M. Brunetière that

if "correspondence" is, so to speak, nothing else but a mutual diary, and is therefore, also, only a form of "confession," or, at all events, of "confidence," it will be seen how the novel in letters continues and extends the form of the personal narrative by broadening and diversifying it.

In Germany Goethe followed the same example in "Werther," which again may be called a novel of revelation or confession. This tradition was carried on in France for a great number of years, until it reached Balzac himself and George Sand. But in the meantime there had arisen in Great Britain an exponent of the historical school to put all the rest to shame. Sir Walter Scott learned his craft partly by the study of Fielding, but he added to the method of that master a power of depicting and glorifying the past that won him innumerable readers. He won the admiration of writers of all schools, and in one of his letters to Mme. Hanska Balzac pays him a very high tribute:

I have been saying for twelve years of Walter Scott what you write me of him, in comparison with him Lord Byron is nothing, or next to

nothing. You are mistaken in regard to the plan of *Kenilworth*. In the minds of all novel-makers and in my mind, that is to say, in the opinion of all connoisseurs, the plan of this work is the grandest, the most complete and extraordinary of all. It is the masterpiece, from this point of view, as *St. Ronan's Well* is the masterpiece for detail and patient finish; as the *Chronicles of the Canongate* is the masterpiece for sentiment; *Ivanhoe* (the first volume, of course) the historical masterpiece; *The Antiquary* for poetry; *The Heart of Midlothian* for interest. They have each a particular merit, but genius is everywhere.

In France Dumas caught something of the genius of Sir Walter, and gave us that splendid series of stories, the best of which are "The Three Musketeers" and the "Count of Monte Christo." It became therefore imperative that a novelist of Balzac's day and generation should make choice between the two paths, that is to say, he should become either historical or realistic. But the words are misleading. The element of romance must come into every story, and the truly historical novel is, as M. Brunetière points out, the contemporary novel. When Sir Walter Scott wrote "Ivanhoe" he contributed nothing to the history of Richard I. and his times. When he wrote "St. Ronan's Well" he described the customs, manners and ways of thinking of the people about him, and therefore produced a document which, in the strictest sense of the word, became historical. No one would turn to "Ivanhoe" for an authentic picture of the manners of the Norman lords and Saxon kings who lived in the time of Cœur-de-Lion. But the historian of the future might well find in "St. Ronan's Well" the evidence given by a witness at first hand of manners as they were in Scott's time. To use the word "romantic" instead of "historical" is equally misleading. Romance in olden days belonged largely to knightly adventure. It is found in the rough in Malory's "Morte d'Arthur," where the knight-errant goes forth on his quest and meets with strange adventures, beautiful damsels in woodlands and fairies in the front of grim castles. But this romance must be inherent in the mind and not dependent upon circumstances. There is as much in it in our days as there was in the days of "Rolande brave and Olivier, and every paladin and peer," who "at Roncesvalles died." But the modern adventurer does not fare forth clad in steel armour, and riding the great horses. He may be despatched into the realms of science, or art, or commerce, and he must keep his head, not as the old warriors did with his hand, but with his brain. The gates of many a stormy career are thrown open to him; but he enters not by the force of his trusty sword, but by intellect and ability. After some consideration Balzac came to realise that this was the case, and so formed the ambition of writing "La Comédie Humaine," which was neither more nor less than a word picture of the society of his time in its various grades. What he tried to do was to describe in his pages the things that had hitherto been unseen, and the characters developed under modern conditions, thus achieving freshness of interest that was impossible to those who followed the ancient ways and went back to history for their subjects. Such, briefly, is the theme upon which M. Brunetière enlarges in his most interesting book. But it was impossible to study the Balzacian novel without paying some attention to the singular personality of Balzac himself. In a preface he takes care to tell the reader not to expect tittle-tattle about the many love affairs of his hero, and yet it was impossible not to touch upon them. Balzac, who was born on May 20th, 1799, lived a full and adventurous life. He first of all took up the study of law, but the monotony of that career appalled him, and after his withdrawal from it he lived a restless and irregular life. He worked out his novels frankly for the means of indulging in pleasure. The following will give some idea of his life:

Emerging from his commercial and industrial ventures with debts only, he remained very curious to know how men like Popinot and Crevel, Du Tillot and Nucingen, Billeraud and Crottat, Roguin and even Gobseck, could have made their fortunes. He interested himself in knowing what men like Birotteau produced in their "laboratories." He watched the fluctuations of the Stock Exchange and the market prices of corn and provisions, of madder and indigo.

His love affairs form very extraordinary reading. His first mistress, Mme. de Berny, was the wife of a magistrate and the mother of nine children when the *liaison* was formed. She exercised over him a "gentle and almost maternal authority," and toned down much of the crude roughness of his youth. But the most important of the women with whom he was brought into connection was Mme. Hanska. Between the two there was that perfection of sympathy that enabled Balzac, in a long series of letters, to pour out his best and most intimate thoughts to her. He had, as M. Brunetière says: found in Countess Hanska an incomparable confidante, from whom he disguised nothing of his money difficulties—exaggerating them a little, at times—nor of his prodigious labour, at times imaginary, which allowed him to meet them. The display of his strength is one of Balzac's strong characteristics, and for eighteen years Countess Hanska gave him a chance to parade it.

With these two keys, the history of the novel and the romantic individual who became chief of the school of

realists, M. Brunetière succeeds in unlocking the heart of one of the most fascinating personalities of his or any other time.

THE FISHERS OF THE TWEED.

THE worth of the Tweed fisheries is measurable in standard coin of the realm. If a buyer wanted to become the possessor of all the fishing rights, he would have to pay £250,000 to the present owners for them. But even this sum does not at all represent the full value of the "Berwick Salmon." The fishermen's gains must also be taken into account. The greater portion of these, as well as a considerable part of the owners' rentals, is necessarily spent in the immediate neighbourhood. The fishermen have to be fed and clothed like other people, and their wants in this respect are principally supplied from local sources. The implements of their trade—the boats and nets and gear—provide employment at Berwick and Tweedmouth and Spittal for many hands, and the agencies which distribute the fish throughout the length and breadth of the land find sustenance for many more. It would, therefore, be within the mark to say that this "unearned increment" of the beautiful Border stream is worth to the Border country a sum which cannot be put at less than £500,000.

The law of the land provides that no fish shall be taken by means of nets between the 14th day of September and the 14th day of February in each year. So for five months in the winter the salmon-fishers must find other work to do or lie idle. A few at the river's mouth, I fear, generally manage to make it possible to fail in their search for winter work, and they loaf in the public-houses and at the street corners in the common or garden way, but many of them go to the deep-sea-fishing. Those on the river itself find odd jobs of various sorts. Some kill ground game at 6d. a couple for the neighbouring farmers; others are tenants of small land holdings which need their labour, and the remainder do such casual work as may turn up. In passing, I should mention an interesting experiment initiated several years ago by Colonel Blake of Tillmouth, the popular chairman of the Northumberland Education Committee, for the benefit, largely, of the Tweed fishers who reside on his estate. This venture, although instituted on somewhat novel lines, has, I understand, been entirely successful, and has given satisfaction to landlord and tenants alike. Contiguous to the village of Donaldsons Lodge, on the Tillmouth estate, is one of the colonel's farms, a place of some 300 acres. This he let a dozen or more years ago to a committee of villagers at the same rent as that which he was previously receiving, and on conditions which left the committee free to allocate the lands among themselves as they saw fit. This plan has worked well, and there has been no trouble and no friction of any kind. The whole of the tenants are not fishermen, but several of them are, and the good sense of Colonel Blake in acting as he did bridged a gap which previously existed in the fishers' working year.

The week which ends on September 14th is a busy one for the salmon men on Tweed. Other fisheries have closed a week before, and for the last six days of the season Tweed holds a monopoly, or something approaching it, for the supply of fish, and, of course, prices go up. During the last week of the season the price of salmon was 2s. 5d. per lb. as they came out of the water. It often happens, too, for some reason or other, that fish are more plentiful, in the estuary, at any rate, during these last few days of the season than they were before. Hence everything points to long hours and strenuous labour as the fishing year approaches its close. The men work hard and long. It is interesting to watch them as they shoot and draw their nets on the fine stretch of beach from the river mouth to Spittal. A dozen men work in company and they keep two nets going, one being "shot" while the other is being hauled in. The men are paid in different ways; but in all cases, to a greater or less extent, the wages depend upon the number and value of fish taken. Sometimes the lessees of the fishery take one half of the fish and the men get the other half. In other cases a standing wage of about 15s. per week is given to each man, and in addition there is paid to him a bonus of from 2s. to 2s. 6d. for every twenty fish caught. A considerable element of speculation is therefore introduced into the work, and, whatever else it may do, it certainly relieves the monotony of the day's labour and stimulates the men to put all their energy into it. Quite wonderful is it to a landsman's eye to see the deft and methodical manner in which they manipulate the mazy folds of the long net as they haul it in and pile it on the sands. The net itself is a big affair, 20ft. or 25ft. in depth, and more than 200yds. in length. To each of the ends are attached two lengthy ropes, one along the top of the net, and one on the bottom, and these permit the net to be suspended in the water a long way from the shore. On the beach, just out of water-mark, are two windlasses, and to these the ropes aforesaid are attached and hauled in. When the

ends of the net approach the shore, the windlasses are discarded, and the men all take station and haul in the net hand over hand, and arrange it in orderly coils and heaps ready to lift again on to the boat for shooting when the hauling is completed. There are no confusion, no bungling, no tangles. Everything goes on as smoothly as the winding and unwinding of a ball of yarn.

A sight much favoured of visitors is this hauling of the nets. They take about as much interest in the business as the fishers themselves, and crowds of them are always to be seen around the "shots." With these same visitors, and with the multitude of children who spring from everywhere, the fishers are very patient. They seldom rebel. This docile disposition may perhaps have some connection with sundry sixpenny bits which find their way with a fair degree of frequency into scaly pockets from young ladies, who enjoy being hoisted by brawny and tattooed arms into the boat to accompany the rowers when the net is again let down. Very taciturn, however, are these same men if a stranger asks them a question about their catch. They do not like being interviewed when on duty. I asked one this last season—a kippered sort of old salt—what weight a fish would be which they had newly caught. "From April to September" was his somewhat surprising reply. I thought he was hard of hearing and asked him again, but received an equally incongruous answer. The fishermen of to-day have often enough to exclaim, as did those of old, that they have toiled all day and caught nothing. But this is not always so. I watched

one haul at Spittal, and there were in it six fish of about 16lb. each and seven smaller ones of 7lb. or 8lb. The market price of these would be about £18, and it took an hour to get them, or rather less. The next shot was worth some £3 and the third 10s. The fourth was blank. Another day I saw a fine haul of twenty fish, which would be worth £25 to £30. Another draw brought only one fish, but it was the heaviest taken on Tweed this last season. It measured 4ft. in length, 2ft. 2in. in girth, scaled 41½lb., and the value of it must have been in the neighbourhood of £5. A year or two ago the season had been a poor one, and the men were dispirited and gloomy; only two days remained for work, and the outlook was the reverse of hopeful. But when hope had just about departed the tide turned, and on one of the two days 150 fish were landed, of a value of £250. Half of this, namely, £125, fell to the share of the twelve men composing the fishery staff, which enabled each of them to receive for his one day's work the sum of ten guineas.

The old stone bridge at Tweedmouth and the ancient walls of Berwick have looked down for centuries upon the fishers of the Tweed as they cast their nets in its waters. For centuries still, no doubt, the bridge and walls will stand firm and secure, and so long as they do, and for centuries still beyond, we may hope that generation after generation of fishermen may follow their calling on Tweed's fair river as it slumbers by in the sunshine, or tumbles along in the storm to bury its secrets and sorrows in the grey North Sea.

J. C.

STARLINGS AND THEIR WAYS.

IF I hear sometimes a bird's note which seems strange to me, which very often happens, for my ear is particularly bad and forgetful of the many little subtle differences which serve to distinguish the note of one bird from another, I generally look around to see if there is a great tit about or a starling. A great tit, because that bird seems to have a bewildering variety of notes, one for every season, if not for every month of the year; and a starling, because, not content with its own queer voice, it varies its gabbling song with imitations of all the birds around. Sometimes these imitations are palpable as such, but very often they are perfect renderings, which would deceive anybody. I have heard of one which could "quack" like a duck, but this must have been unusually gifted; the best, I think, I have myself noticed was when at an hotel in a Midland town I heard in the early morning a partridge's call. It was so perfect, and at the same time such an unusual place in which to hear a partridge, that I jumped out of bed and saw it was a starling on a stable roof opposite my window!

This is a bird which has increased in numbers enormously, and it is very easy to understand why this has come about. To begin



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YOUNG BIRDS.

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with, it is very prolific, laying seven and eight eggs; it always has two broods, and sometimes three, in the course of the year, and it can adapt itself to very varying conditions. In towns and buildings it is nearly as bold and nearly as numerous as the house-sparrow, building its nest indiscriminately in any hole big enough to hold the straggling, untidy collection of straws and feathers.

Under the tiles, in gutter-pipes, holes in walls and church towers, under bridges and in chimneys—in all these places it is generally secure from molestation, unless some angry householder, in desperation at finding his chimneys smoke, or his pipes overflow, pokes out the nest. Even so, the starlings promptly set to work to rebuild as soon as his back is turned, and very often succeed in their object through sheer pertinacity and perseverance. They are equally at home in the woods, where they find plenty of holes in trees; and if these are scarce they make no scruple in ejecting the woodpeckers from their holes, which they have so industriously hewn out for themselves. In this respect they are as much of a nuisance as the house-sparrows are with the martins' nest. One would think that the green woodpecker, a bigger bird than a starling, with a beak like a pickaxe, would be able to hold his own; but the starlings' pluck and pertinacity again scores, and, as a rule, they gain possession of the premises. Then they fill up the bottom of the hole with feathers and straws,



R. B. Lodge.

AT THE ENTRANCE TO NEST IN OLD WOOD

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generally leaving them sticking out of the entrance hole, to show to all the world what has happened. If not, you can often tell a starling's abode by the strong and unmistakable smell, which can be noticed at a distance of several feet. Towards the middle of summer the first broods of young starlings begin to be noticed in every direction, the hedges appear to be full of them and thousands are feeding out of sight amid the growing grass; as the summer advances, these broods pack together, and are eventually joined by the later broods, so that by the autumn there are immense flocks numbering many thousands. And these are the birds which our forefathers were accustomed to call "solitary" thrushes; for these grey, unspotted youngsters were not recognised as starlings, but were considered as a separate species with the above singularly inappropriate name.

As to whether starlings are beneficial or harmful, there is considerable difference of opinion. As far as the farmer is concerned, there is no doubt whatever that starlings, for at least nine months of the year, are entirely useful. They are then searching for grubs of all sorts, and devour quantities of cockchafer and crane-fly grubs, which eat the roots of grasses. It is only when the fruit is ripe that their services are not so readily appreciated, for all sorts of fruit are greedily eaten by them, cherries in particular being much appreciated. No doubt they consider they are fairly entitled to share the harvest in return for services rendered. The worst of it is that, unless they are checked, or the fruit protected, they are apt to want it all. Later in the year they are very partial to elderberries, and soon strip the trees of the purple bunches.

The starling is a cheerful creature, and sociable withal. On the coldest day, if the sun shines at all, "the starling claps his tiny castanets" and, perching on some chimney-pot or barn roof, gurgles and gabbles and whistles to himself, apparently out of pure joy and contentment, mingling with his song interludes of mimicry. Seen thus in the sunshine, his plumage is very beautiful, so spangled and glossy, the feathers being shot with purple and green reflections. To the fly-fisher, the starling is quite one of the most useful birds. From the primary quill feathers are made the shiny upright wings of the red-spinner, blue dun quill gnat and many of the most deadly floating imitations of the smaller cocktail flies, and the same feathers dyed cunningly are capital for the many shades of olive quill; while the purple green hackle feathers are just the thing for black spiders and black gnats, no cock's hackle being so small and short in the fibre, or of such glossy lustre. Without an assortment of starlings' wings and hackles no fly-tier's collection is complete. It is certain that the fly-fisher who is unable to kill his trout on



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COCK STARLING.

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flies of his own tying, however skilful he may be in other respects, misses half the joys of angling.

I esteem the starling very much for its own sake, but this estimation is enhanced by the memory of the many trout which I have killed by means of its feathers. R. B. LODGE.

COUNTRY LIFE IN BURNS'S DAY.

IN this year of grace 1907 there are few places in our Island Home where Nature dwells in repose undisturbed by the jarring noise of wheels or unsullied by the noisome smoke of commerce. We walk over well-made moorland roads to the cheery accompaniment of the telegraph wire, and enter the solitary upland farm to find the latest journals from the outside world. Still, in spite of the pessimism of lettered observers, we note beautiful trout beckons flowing past well-tilled fields, and whitewashed steadings cosily surrounded by ricks of plenty. The rich flatlands are waving with yellow grain or green with abundant root crops. It is true the barren rocks and wine-red moors occasionally invade these fair holms and haughs, as if purple promontories were advancing into a green sea of husbandry; yet even these seemingly worthless heights provide sport for the wealthy, and consequently a revenue to the proprietor and scores of humble gillies. A little over a hundred years ago the picture was less pleasing. The fat, undrained hollows were filled with quaking bogs, fit home for the hollow-sounding bittern, the skirling curlew and the plaintive peewit, but sending forth pestilential vapours that took toll of the human inhabitants, and laid them low in beds of fever and ague. Few trees were seen to clothe these dark "waste hills and brown unsightly plains." Johnson, who was no weak sentimentalist, observed this lack of trees; yet the wayfaring man of to-day, charmed with the view of bosky dales and wooded heights, wonders at the strictures of the stern old lexicographer. As it would have cost too much to drain the sodden moss, only the natural slopes were tilled to produce a crop of scanty oats or miserable barley, sown so late that they were often cut before they were fully matured. Farming implements of the rudest description were employed, like the crooked spades one still sees in misty Skye. The low-roofed clay-biggins were thatched with heather and rushes, for straw was too expensive to waste thus, and must be kept as food for the lean, stunted cattle. Around the cotter's humble dwelling was a kitchen garden, of which the chief produce was the kail or colewort said to have been introduced into Scotland by Cromwell's soldiery. To nibble this in winter "coward maukin," the hare, used to come at dusk, and, leaving her track in the snow, was often captured to mend the scanty fare. At the cottage door were planted boortree and rowan, or, as we should say in lettered English, elder bush and mountain ash,



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THE MOTHER.

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both possessed of sovereign virtue in warding off such evil-doers as warlocks and witches.

To realise the dreary depressing landscape we must seek out the most forlorn parts of Donegal, the *morne* solitudes of Sutherland or the wildest wilds of Connemara, yet even there we are within easy hail of the civilising iron road. Few have seen the keen-sighted eagle in his mountain fastness, where he dines on blue hare or gorges on wounded deer or braxy mutton. There he is permitted to remain, where formerly he reigned, and a spirit of picturesque sentimentality protects him from the bird-stuffing enthusiast. The red deer are but wild by courtesy; the badger and the tawny mountain fox from necessity; but gone are the wild cat, the osprey and the bittern; the others are sure to follow.

The life of the peasantry, though rude, was self-sufficing. If the standard of comfort was low, the spirit of contentment was great. Rudely ground oats formed the morning and evening diet, "chief of Scotia's food," as the poet terms it, and for which a decadent posterity substitute a collation of Chicago beef and cheap tea. The peasant's ill-fed hawkie, housed in the same rude dwelling, gave a scanty supply of milk and butter and cheese, the latter "weelhained" to grace the frugal meal on special festivities only. Wheat bread was unknown except in the homes of the gentry, but "souple" scones of "bear" or barley-meal, with "haverbread," that is, oatcake, were the peasant's staff of life. The midday broth was prepared with salted meat, barley and kail, with perhaps an occasional leek, but carrots, turnips and potatoes were unknown dainties with which even the landed classes were experimenting, while to this day salads and vegetables are not so well prepared as in the sister kingdom. No wonder that "at kirk or market, mill or smiddie," convivial spirits sought an earthly paradise in reaming swats, in "tippenny" ale or fiercer usquebagh, and inspired by John Barleycorn were rendered "glorious, o'er a' the ills o' life victorious."

For domestic purposes each cottier cultivated a small patch of flax, whose seeds must have formed the food of the bird we name the linnet, but which was formerly known as the lintwhite. Not far from the farm "toon" was a pool of stagnant water wherein the stems of the lint were placed to rot; afterwards the bundles of plants were taken out and dried, then beaten with a wooden mallet to loosen the fibres, which were heckled with iron-toothed combs to get rid of the superfluous pulp and to teeze them into tow. After all this growing, gathering, drowning, drying, pounding and combing, the lassies spun the long-suffering plant into thread and carried it to the village "wabster," who sent it back in long grey lengths which were yet to whiten in the sun's rays before it could be finally used.

O leeze me on my spinning wheel,
And leeze me on my rock an' reel,
Frae tap to tae that cleeds me bien.
And haps me fiel and warm at e'en;
I'll set me down and sing and spin,
Blest wi' content and milk and meal—
O leeze me on my spinning wheel.

With the return of bleak-faced Halloween the harvest is garnered to the festive music of the jovial "rantin' kirns," when a brief spell of simple enjoyment cheers the gloom of approaching winter. "November chill blows loud wi' angry sigh," the sun but glints above the horizon, showing a pale and feeble ray which expires at four of the afternoon. To pass the long dark nights and economise light and fuel the kindly neighbours gather in each other's houses. While the lassies work with rock and reel, the lads make ropes and reins and wooden bowls or wooden handles for their rural implements; the grey-haired sire or long-remembered granny recounts the stories of a past age, or the hoary jests from the "Book of Wit and Wisdom," that lies all week but Sunday on the ledge of the window-seat. Outside, the darkness is peopled with brownies and bogles, warlocks and witches; even Auld Hornie himself is very real to a people reared on Calvin and want. The westerly breezes laden with Atlantic vapour shake the doors and strike the tiny green-eyed windows, causing the inmates to creep closer round the cheery blaze, like children who have talked themselves afraid. A homely supper of sweet-

milk cheese and farls of oatcake is handed round before the neighbours depart into the haunted mirk. The lads carry the distaffs and spinning wheels, and in spite of fears much daffing takes place as they trace their way home "o'er mosses, waters, slaps and styles." The French peasantry still maintain these *veillées* because they engender habits of thrift and charity. Scotch hospitality was no mere empty expression, for, though poor, the humble cotters welcomed to their board the wandering gaberlunzie, the itinerant merchant or the travelling tailor. The tailor came at regular intervals to make up the "hodden gray" spun and woven from the tarry wool of the cottier's own flock, and he boarded with the household till the task was completed, retailing the gossip of all the farms for miles around. The chapman was a long-looked-for visitor, whose packs contained such treasures as ribbons and remnants of silk, combs and trifles of simple ornament to deck the rustic belles, besides auld ballants and chapbooks that are now worth their weight in gold. The gaberlunzie was a licensed jester, whose well-worn fiddle screeched out the music for the reels and strathspeys at rants and kirns and penny-weddings, when throned on the "winnock bunker" he presided over the noisy crowd of dancers.

In passing through the various countries of Europe we are charmed with the coiffures of the peasant women and the blue blouses of the men; we think of their artistic value, but it seldom occurs to us that this garb was at one time a badge of servitude, a mode of expressing the insuperable barrier between gentle and simple. Strange that, at an epoch when the peasants of France were wrestling with the injustices of feudalism, the peasantry of Scotland were patiently working out their own salvation, and one of their number, "half-fed, half-mad," was expressing the freedom, equality and brotherhood of man. Much of the so-called radicalism of Burns is but the revolt of a proud sensitive nature, who feels divine gifts and promptings far above his class, and cannot claim the recognition of his right to be considered among the great.

Burns, though often regarded as an ardent worshipper of Nature, is only aware of its presence to afford a background for his human figures. Even in the much-quoted poem on the daisy, the poet sees an emblem of his own humble life, "scarce reared above the parent earth," and towards the end of the poem utters a remarkable prophecy of his own death. There is the same attitude towards Nature running through the lyrics of the learned Goethe, whose "Haidenröslein" might be a translation of "Banks and Braes." You will find none of the fine poetic frenzy of Wordsworth in the peasant poet, but instead of this "the simple annals of the poor." J. P. PARK.

SCENERY AND SPORT IN NEW ZEALAND.

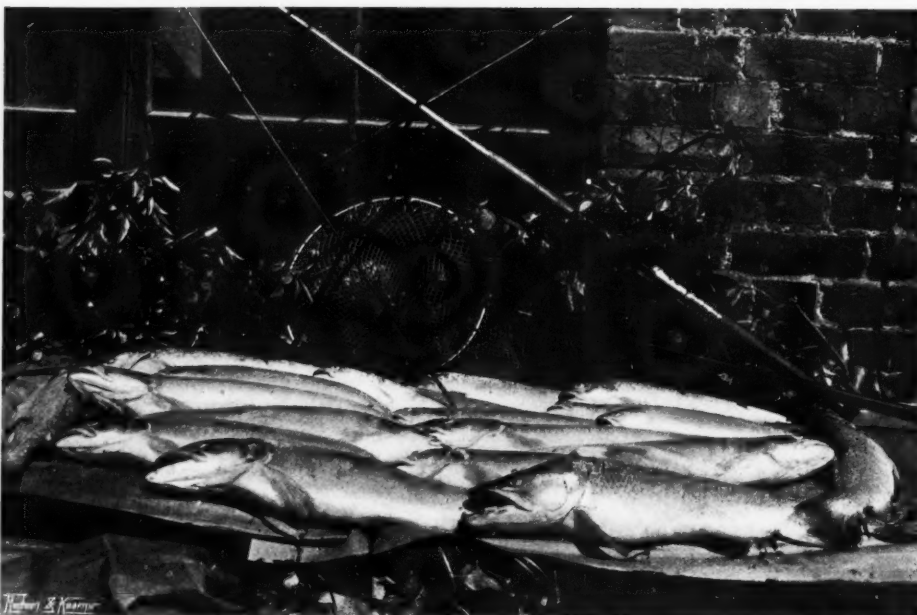
THE average Englishman knows but little more about New Zealand than he does about Timbuctoo, yet it is a place distinctly worth knowing. It has a delightful climate, without any extremes of heat or cold; it is quite a rare thing to pass a day without seeing the sun. Sometimes there is a really foggy morning—never a day—and then a few ferry steamers and small boats get mixed up, but within an hour or two the mist passes away and the sun shines bright



PLAYING A GOOD ONE.

and clear. The island colony comprises 104,000 square miles, and therefore closely approximates to the size of Great Britain and Ireland. The scenery probably cannot be surpassed in the world. If you want sounds and fiords, where can you find anything more sublime than Milford Haven and the other West Coast sounds? If you prefer lake scenery, what finer can you get in the world than Lake Wakatipu's noble expanse of water with her snow-clad sentinels looking down upon her glassy bosom in silent majesty? Or if you like not the cold virgin purity of the spotless peaks you may hark away to Lake Waikaremoana in the North Island, and there for scores of miles coast round cliffs and mountains clad with the most luxuriant bush, where wave the stately tree ferns and the graceful nikau palm beneath the giant kaurio which rear their stately heads on high, all unmindful of the deadly rata's encircling embrace, and the time when they shall be dust and the clinging vine become the tree. Here bathed in the glorious sunlight of the North the lovely *Todea superba*, the Prince of Wales's feathers as it is popularly called, waves its lovely fronds, and the warm rich beauty of the whole scene is mirrored deep in the still waters of the lake, as though Nature were not satisfied with presenting it once; and to the enraptured eyes of those who have not been accustomed to it from childhood it cannot be presented too often.

Perhaps it may be that you have seen all these things, and are a little blasé about scenery. Then you may go to Rotorua, and there in that strange and wonderful land you shall see weird marvels which you can see nowhere else; and the mere telling of them briefly would fill a volume. There you may see the boiling spring bubbling up in the cold water; behold the giant Waimangu throw his quarter acre of mud and boulders 1,500ft. to 2,000ft. high in the air, and spread his canopy of snow-white steam, like a huge umbrella shade, yet as high again, over and beyond his wonderful "stick." Here you may put your dinner in a steam hole in the garden, and cover it with a sack, knowing full well that when you return even an hour late it will be "cooked to a turn"; here may be seen creeks that run hot water and the ferns and bushes which are near enough to drink of the stimulating mineral draught are of the delicate tints of green that befit the hothouse, while a little further away their less-favoured friends gradually take on the more sombre tones of the natural bush; here you may see creeks dammed up and forming fairy-like baths of delightful, invigorating warmth, where the ferns kiss the water



A DAY'S BAG TO TWO RODS.

and the life and joy of the bush is all around you; and if you be a cripple there are hot baths here that will make you throw away your crutches. This is no figure of speech. There are probably no more wonderful baths in the world than those of the famous sanatorium at Rotorua, so ably, artistically and generously directed and cared for by Mr. T. E. Donne, the head of the New Zealand Government's Tourist Department. Rheumatism and sciatica are in most cases completely and permanently vanquished, while—and this will be good news for Englishmen—gout is more than checked.

Beautiful scenery, sunny skies, and healing waters are not all that New Zealand has to offer to those who make their homes there. Sport in abundance and of all kinds from deer-stalking to duck-shooting may be had at a minimum of outlay. The fishing can probably not be excelled anywhere. The season opens on October 1st and closes on April 15th. Licences cost £1 for the season, and this is the sole charge, which entitles one to fish hundreds of miles of beautiful water for six and a-half months! For one month he must pay 5s. and for a week 2s. 6d.! Ladies and boys under sixteen years of age are charged half price! Is not this enough to make many a poor fellow envious who pays 50 guineas to 70 guineas for a rod in some small corner here? Some of the largest rivers which are well stocked with trout carry many times the volume of water that old Father

Thames rolls down to the sea. In the early days of acclimatisation trout ova, *Salmo fario* and Loch Leven, were obtained principally from Great Britain. In later years fontinalis and rainbow were introduced from the United States of America. The fontinalis has thriven only in a few rivers such as the Waikato in the North Island, whereas the rainbow has done well wherever liberated, and is especially abundant in the Waikato and Okorovie Rivers and in Lakes Rotorua, Rotoiti, Waikaremoana. The record brown trout caught in New Zealand weighed 37lb., and many others weighing about 30lb. have been caught.

The climate of New Zealand is very mild and the same class of clothing may be used there as is generally worn here. New Zealand is not only the sportsman's paradise, but it is also the working man's paradise. The New Zealand working man is a very different person—there he is a person—to the English workman. New Zealand is unquestionably the most English of our Colonies. It has been well named the Britain of the South.



WELL GAFFED!

There is, in my opinion, only one thing wrong with it, and that is irremediable. It is so far from London; but many will not consider this a drawback.

Intending visitors can always rely upon obtaining the fullest and most accurate information as to New Zealand's resources,

sporting or otherwise, upon applying to Mr. T. E. Donne at the office of the Agent-General for New Zealand, 13, Victoria Street, Westminster. Mr. Donne is himself one of the best-known deer-stalkers and fishermen of the many ardent followers of these sports that there are in New Zealand.

P. A. VAILE.

PRESERVING AND RENEWING OLD HEDGES.

THE preservation of old hedges is quite as important as their construction. Neglected fences take various forms; they may have been allowed to grow to the height of 20ft., roughly grown as a shelter for animals, or they have been trimmed on the top, so as not to be more than 3ft. in height, but through neglect, at the roots, show a series of gaps below. There are endless variations between these two extremes. A common method, and one which may be considered bad—for a hedge is not a fence for some years—is to cut down the hedge to the stump or stool, so as to allow the young wood to grow to a hedge; this has the only advantage of not requiring much skill to produce it. If there are very coarse high stools it is advisable to level off the old stumps to make them throw up an entirely new growth, which



A. H. Robinson. A WOLD FENCE IN EAST YORKSHIRE. A LITTLE THIN.

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through the presence of hosts of weeds, and how through the seeds of weeds spreading from them they tend to the foulness of land, the advantages of the fuel can scarcely warrant their taking the place of the more effective, but less extensive, narrow quick hedge. Narrow plantations and trees planted in hedges are nearly always a mistake, as the trees damage the fence. Where a hedge has been neglected and left untrimmed for many years, the only way to deal with it, if it is in a fit state for improvement, is to lay it, using the long rods for wattling. In dealing with such a hedge, it is very important that the selection of wood should be carefully made for the purpose of wattling. The first thing to do is to cut down level to the ground all decaying stumps; next to pick out rods for wattling and stakes from the more vigorous stools. The most frequent shoots are thrown out by young rods.



A. H. Robinson. AN OLD FENCE SUPPORTED BY STAKES AND TOP RAILS.

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afterwards may be laid. Nothing is more unsightly than big old stumps, and they will always tend to make a newly laid hedge become gappy; they are caused by bad cutting on previous occasions, and show the necessity for lower cutting. The chief objection to planting hedges on high, narrow banks is that the falling away of the soil exposes the stump, causing it to protrude. Whatever may be the system of renovating, the earth must be laid well up to the stems. When ditches are cleaned out the output should be placed on the hedge roots.

Hedgerows with pollard trees—narrow plantations, so to speak—are more frequently met with in the Southern Counties, and are often largely relied upon for fuel; considering the amount of land they occupy, how they harbour insects of all sorts, become the nurseries for fungoid diseases

Also clear out briars, clematis and all creepers, as they smother the growth of the quick, and are among the worst



A. H. Robinson.

WELL CUT AND LAID. JUST RIGHT.

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enemies that have to be dealt with in hedges. Elder is another great nuisance in hedges, making them unsightly by its growth, the rapidity of which causes them quickly to become gappy. Elder plants should all be cut out, as birds also carry the seeds to the adjacent hedgerows, and there the seeds frequently establish themselves. It will be often necessary to trim down the brush, so as to make a clearance to give freedom for the work of laying. It is also a good plan, where the wood is of varying thickness, and the hedge is gappy, to stand back from time to time, to see which wood should be used, and which should be cleared away. A good deal of the success in restoring a hedge depends on the preparation of the wood before laying. The bed should be cleaned before the wood is brought down, as it will be most convenient to do it at this stage.

In preparing the wood the cut should be given by an upward stroke. The surface is then smooth, rain will not lodge upon it, and little decay takes place; but when the cut is by a downward stroke it causes the wood to splinter; and rain and frost, with constant damp, will cause considerable decay. It is this very downward stroke that is the chief cause of gappiness in old hedges. If the wood is thin, one stroke is sufficient. It must be cut so far through that it may be bent without splintering. The angle at which the wood is laid will regulate the length of stroke, for the lower it is laid the more extensive must be the cut. Where the wood is thicker, a chip might be made by a downward stroke, so that the rod may be laid down without splintering. So long as there is a small amount of wood adhering to the bark, the sap will flow to the upper part. One important point to bear in mind when restoring live hedges is to procure a new growth of wood. The object, therefore, should be to reconstruct the hedge so that it may grow into a fence. When filling in gaps, this point should not be lost sight of—that if a large quantity of dead

wood is laid in, no new wood can grow there. A small length of post and rail fence, sufficiently strong to last until the gap is filled by growth, should always be used in preference.

If an old hedge is so thoroughly worn out and decayed that it is useless to attempt to renovate it, there is nothing to be done but to stub it up and clear it away. As fences are frequently on boundaries, and one may not remove a neighbour's landmark,

fences must be placed on old sites sometimes. Should this be necessary, the soil must be moved and remade; for this purpose the earth requires to be laid on one side, and a wide, deep, new bed made from the adjoining soil, the earth from the old bed being put back to fill in the hole made. I should advise liming the land when cleared and cleaned before replanting, and the putting of dung at the roots after planting. It would be best to trench

the latter in with the new earth, as the old hedge which has cropped the land for a long period has exhausted most of the nourishment from the soil. If the new soil is obtained within the reach of a spade throw, it will be sufficiently fresh, and need not be carted from a distance. It will be necessary to provide plant food for the roots of the new quick hedge, and for this purpose long manure should be trenched in, in preference to well-rotted manure, which would yield its nourishment too quickly. It is better that the growth should be extended over a lengthened period, as too rapid growth tends to the bushy development of the hedge. On thin and barren soils well-rotted turf or sod trenched in is very useful, and supplies a certain amount of food for some time.

Provided hedges are placed in a proper position, ditches in conjunction with hedges may add to their efficiency as fences; they are also useful and sometimes necessary for drainage purposes. If, however, the hedge is badly placed, *i.e.*, too near to the edge of the ditch, the earth in course of time falls away and leaves the roots bare, making it difficult to keep the bottom of the hedge compact. The usefulness of a hedge, and



A. H. Robinson. AN OLD FENCE PAST REPAIR. BETTER PUT UP WIRE.

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A. H. Robinson. EFFECT OF ASH TREE GROWING IN HEDGE.

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A. H. Robinson. NOT SUFFICIENTLY LAID; TOO MANY UPRIGHTS LEFT.

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its length of life as a fence, depend upon the density of its bottom growth. Open ditches are the best drains, but they must be kept well cleaned out, and unless they are required for drainage purposes, they should not be made in conjunction with hedges.

When hedges are strongly established and vigorous, it is advisable to check them to prevent too much top growth to the detriment of their bottom growth. Trimming is a form of pruning, and frequent pruning produces a number of branching shoots, which cause the face of the hedge to present a dense front. This work is most quickly performed on a well-established hedge by a long-handled plashing bill, used with an upward stroke, and can be done at any time when labour can be spared for it and other work is slack. At a time when every care must be exercised in all matters of expenditure, and when it is realised that the returns from farming are small in comparison with the outlay, it ought not to be a matter of surprise, perhaps, that hedges have always been, more or less, subject to neglect. Of course, no direct pecuniary return can be looked for from them, so it is not unnatural that their preservation should be the first of the many operations on the farm to be neglected. But, surely, it is doubtful economy, where a stitch in time may save nine; for we know how, when once a weakness commences in a hedge, it rapidly increases to an unsightly gap, and a gappy hedge no longer performs its first duty as a fence. To produce a hedge, so as to become a reliable

fence, is a matter of much expense, but once it has become so, it is not expensive, considering what is expected from it, to maintain it. For a reasonable amount of fencing is as essential to the proper working of a farm as is the homestead itself. The maintenance of hedges has this advantage in respect of the necessary expenditure to be bestowed upon them, that the work can be performed at a time when there is little else of importance to be done on the farm, consequently good labourers can be kept during periods of slackness, and their services thus secured in seasons when more important operations are necessary, and require good hands to carry them out. Therefore, this feature alone should practically do away with the excuse for neglecting to keep hedges in a thorough and efficient state. It is of the utmost importance that hedges, especially young ones, or cut and laid hedges, should be guarded from sheep and horses. Rabbits do irreparable injury, and where they are numerous it is impossible to get good hedges, unless they are well wired and the wire carefully watched.

Adjoining grassland, hedges are generally left higher for shelter, and when an old hedge is cut down adjoining a grass field (especially on the east and north sides), it should be done in sections, so as not to destroy all the shelter. I am indebted in some measure in putting the essential points of the above subject together to an excellent article written some years ago by W. J. Malden.

M. L.

IN THE GARDEN.

PLANTING TUFTED PANSIES.

IN the recently issued volume of the Royal Horticultural Society's Journal there is an excellent report of a lecture given by Mr. D. B. Crane before the Horticultural Club. A strong plea is made for the exquisite little Violetta Pansies, which should be more grown in our rock gardens and places where such flowers are appropriate. Writing of the growing of tufted Pansies, it is mentioned that "Simple though the culture of the tufted Pansy may be, that it is better understood to-day cannot be denied, and this has been an important factor in the more recent development of the plant. Few growers who make a planting annually would think of using the same quarters two or three years in succession unless the soil be renewed or a heavy dressing of good manure be given to the ground. Contrary to the opinion universally held, the Viola is a deep-rooting subject. On one occasion a plant was lifted from the open border, and the greatest care exercised in its removal. On being placed on a table it was ascertained that the roots were running through the soil quite 3ft. from the surface. Such a voracious feeder must necessarily draw upon the resources of the soil, and for this reason it is easy to understand how quickly it must become impoverished and the plant fail unless renewed with soil of a rich and lasting character each season. Regarding the planting: For an early spring display plant in warm and sheltered situations in October; but in the case of the plants being required to flower continuously from early summer till quite late in the autumn, late February or early March is the better time."

SOME BEAUTIFUL HARDY ANNUAL FLOWERS.

The days are lengthening and the Snowdrops peering through the soil, to bring thoughts of the spring that is at hand. Such thoughts should remind us of the work that must be shortly undertaken if a bright flower garden is desired during the summer and autumn. Nothing will contribute more to this than a wise selection of hardy and half-hardy annuals, and the following include a few of the showiest and most beautiful in cultivation (all have been grown in the garden of the writer, and given great satisfaction):

China Asters.—We intend to grow more of these lovely flowers this year, not the formal types, but those known as Ostrich Plume, which may be likened to a Japanese Chrysanthemum, having that beauty of form we associate with the smaller-flowered varieties. The colours of the China Aster in this section are exceptionally lovely, the soft mauve or lavender in particular; but there are white, pink, sky blue and purple shades as well, all meriting a place in our gardens. The seed was sown in April in a cold frame, and the seedlings planted out when large enough in the places they were permanently to remain. Many sow the seeds in warmth in March, and the plants perhaps are the better for this, as they flower earlier than those treated otherwise. China Asters enjoy a rich soil, should be planted about



FLOWERS ON WALL.

the end of May, and in a dry summer watered freely to prevent an attack of red spider, which attacks the leaves when the weather is exceptionally hot.

Annual Chrysanthemums Morning Star and Evening Star.—These are two of the most beautiful of the Annual Chrysanthemums, and raised by Messrs. Sutton and Sons of Reading. They may be compared with the Marguerite, the variety Morning Star having very large flowers of a primrose colour, resembling, as this firm writes, "the shade of colour seen in many of our best Narcissi." One of the great features of this and other varieties is the length of time the flowers remain fresh when gathered and used in the house. The height of the plant is 18in., and it is wise to thin out the seedlings to quite 1ft. apart to produce a strong and satisfactory development of the growth. There are two ways of growing the Annual Chrysanthemums, one by sowing the seed outdoors in April, and the other by sowing in gentle heat in the middle of March, and growing on the plants steadily until the end of May, when they should be transferred to the border, or whatever position is intended for them. Evening Star is a sport from Morning Star, and has flowers of a deep golden colour, this being the only difference between the two forms.

Gypsophila elegans.—We cannot understand why so charming an annual flower as this is not more grown in our gardens. Few prettier flowers exist, and the seed germinates readily when sown late in March or early in April. The flowers are small, but cloud over the graceful stems, a billow of white, quite as beautiful to look at as the mass of starry bloom that the perennial

G. paniculata gives for many weeks in the year. There is a suspicion of violet in the flower, but this only gives it an added beauty.

Godetias Duchess of Albany and Apple Blossom.—The Godetias were a great success last year, and the drifts of snowy white flowers from the first named created much interest. We sow the seed in the middle of March and in rich soil, thinning out the seedlings vigorously to enable the individual plant to develop naturally. We have constantly urged the importance of severe thinning out, neglect of this duty having given an undeserved reputation to the annual flower of weediness. This is simply the result of an overcrowded growth. The first-named Godetia grows 1ft. high, and the Apple Blossom 18in., the colour of the flowers suggesting the pretty variety's name.

An Annual "Cypress."—*Kochia scoparia* reminds one so strongly of a Cypress that we have given it this name. It has, of course, no relationship with the Cypress, but is an annual from Southern Europe, varying in height from 3ft. to 4ft., and having grass leaves in such abundance that the plant makes quite a little green bush. Sow the seed in April outdoors, and thin out the seedlings so that they remain about 18in. apart. Besides its value in the garden it is a charming plant for a pot. It is quite an amateur's annual, and seems only to have attained popularity during the past two or three years.



SOME nine miles from the port of Kingston-on-Hull is the great house of Burton Constable, an East Riding seat which has never changed owners by bargain and sale since the riders of William the Norman wasted the North. It is in the wild lowlands of Holderness, the sea within five miles of its eastern porch. Santriburtone, land of the Archbishop of York, it was in the days of Domesday Book, and at the beginning of the twelfth century it had the name of Erenburgh Burton, for it was then the land of the noble dame Erenburgh or Erenlurge of Burton, whose name tells us that she was not of English blood. She was twice wedded, her first husband being Gilbert of Alost from Flanders, and her second mate Ulbert the Constable. From Ulbert and Erenlurge the twentieth century lord of Burton can trace his succession. Burton is in the bounds of Swine parish, and a gift by Erenlurge of Burton, wife of Ulbert, of a ploughgang of her lands to Swine Priory is the first of the Constable documents, and when the prioress of Swine exchanged Erenlurge's gift for other land of the Prior of Bridlington, Robert, the son of Erenlurge, whose chief seat was at Halsham, confirmed the bargain. So the Constables were settled at Burton and Halsham, and Constable succeeded Constable therein in spite of warrings and wanderings. For far afield some of them went, a Robert Constable of Burton mortgaging to a house of monks his Halsham lands to find means to go with his following to Holy Land, where he laid his

bones at Acre. They were a knightly race, these Constables, and the King's summons to come to his wars came often to Burton. When Sir Marmaduke Constable of Flamborough led the left wing of the English host at Flodden, he had about him, besides his three "seemly sons," his brother and his Percy son-in-law, Sir John Constable of Burton, whom strangers unskilled in Yorkshire pedigrees reckoned as his cousin. But the Flamborough house had another origin, and Sir Robert Constable, who swung on a gallows for his share in the Pilgrimage of Grace, and Sir William Constable the Cromwellian colonel whose regiment carried off the Royal Standard at Edgehill, and whose name is on the King's death warrant, are not names in the Burton family history.

In the seventeenth century the Constables of Burton were raised to the peerage in the person of Sir Henry Constable, the head of the house. He was son of Henry Constable of Halsham, sheriff of the county under Queen Mary, by Margaret Dormer from Buckinghamshire, so obstinate a recusant papist that she was "not to be reformed by any persuasion nor yet by coercion." King James knighted Henry Constable the younger at the Tower of London in 1614, and six years later made him a peer of Scotland, as Lord Constable and Viscount Dunbar. A recusant like his mother and, indeed, like most of his kinsfolk, it was found in 1629 that the Viscount Dunbar did not frequent his parish church. But he had some courtly quality that kept him in Court favour, and the King gave him a royal letter which



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"COUNTRY LIFE."



THE WEST FACADE.

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DINING-HALL

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PART OF THE EAST FRONT.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

guaranteed him immunity from harrying conformists. That he was a man of open hand with a fine wastefulness we know, for his contemporaries note him as a gambler who once lost £3,000 in gold at a single sitting.

The peerage gave a title to but three generations of Constables, the last Constable of Burton and last Viscount

gentleman of ancient family, and to their son Cuthbert came Burton Constable with the condition of taking the name and arms of the Constables. Besides being of near kin to the old Constables, this squire of Burton was born in their faith. Douay had given him an education among the exiled children of the English Roman Catholics, and Montpellier the degree of Doctor



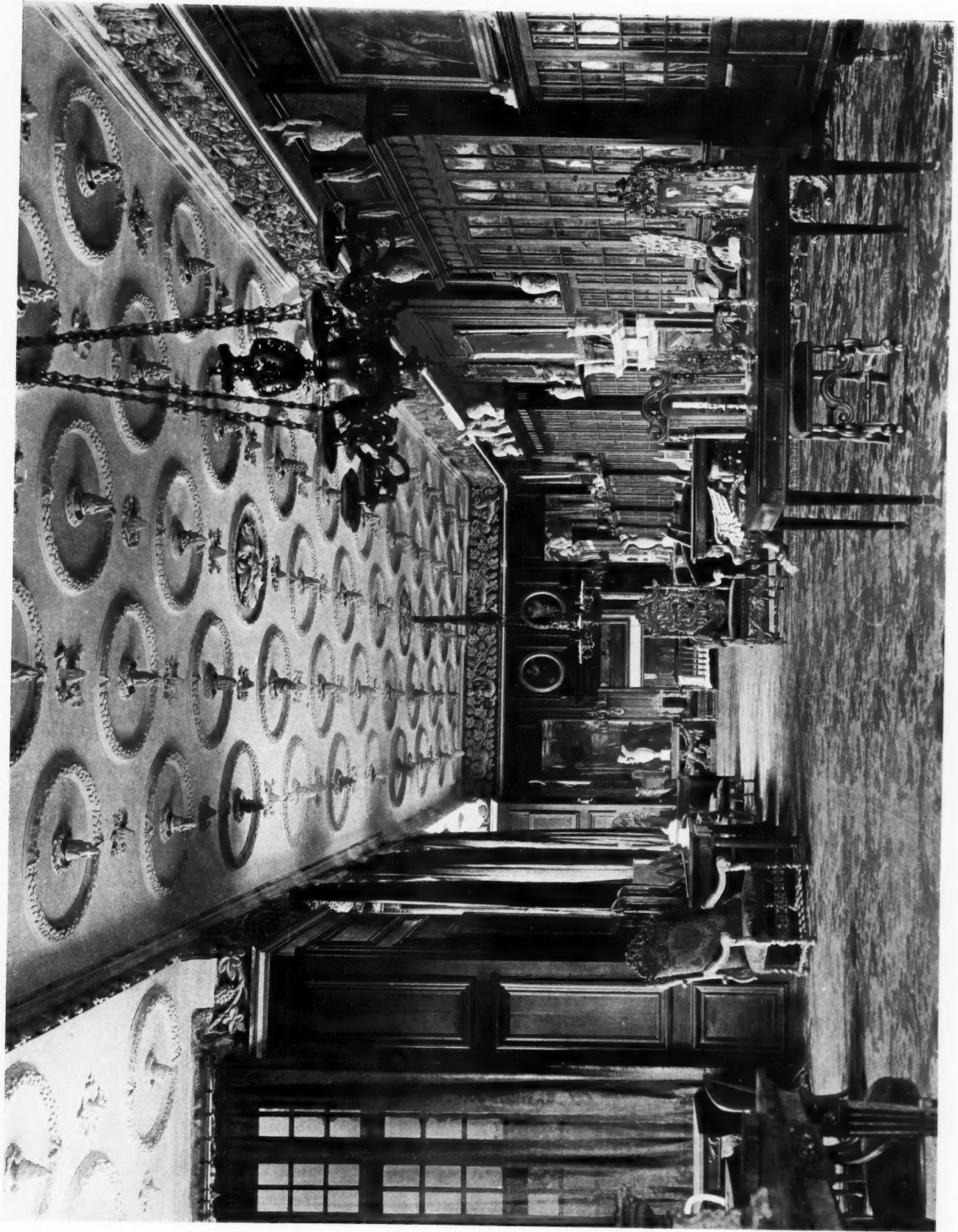
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THE GALLERY HALL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

Dunbar dying in 1718. Constables sprung from the house might even now be traced. The humble landscape painter, who is the most famous man that ever bore the name, came of a Yorkshire stock, doubtless a stray from this or the Flamborough line, but here the main line ended, although the surname went on. Cicely Constable, sister of the last Viscount, had married Francis Tunstall of Wycliffe Hall by the Durham border, a

of Medicine. He brought a scholar's taste to Burton, where he built and planted, collected manuscripts, corresponded with Hearne the Oxford antiquary, formed a library, and made a name for himself as the "Catholic Mæcenas of his age." He died at Burton in the spring of 1746, while the Duke of Cumberland was marching north to crush that rebellion for whose success so many people of Squire Constable's persuasion were secretly



THE LONG GALLERY.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

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praying. Burton was in the Tunstall line a little more than 100 years, these Constables of the second house running out with Francis Constable of Burton and Wycliffe, who died in 1821, leaving Burton to his kinsman, the Hon. Thomas Hugh Clifford of Tixall, who died before he succeeded: his son Sir Thomas followed him. With him another Roman Catholic gentleman, bred abroad in the tastes of a scholar, came to Burton to take the Constable surname and live under the old Constables' roof. His father, a nephew both of the last Viscountess Dunbar and of the wife of Cuthbert Tunstall, was a younger son of the Lord Clifford of Chudleigh and husband of Barbara Aston, who brought him her father Lord Aston's estate of Tixall. On the death of his parents Thomas Hugh Clifford inherited Tixall-on-Trent, a

Constable in 1894. Sir Thomas and Sir Frederick had each married a Chichester, and in the issue of Sir Thomas's daughter, wife of a Chichester of Calverleigh, was found a new master for Burton Constable, which has been enjoyed in turn by Constables, Tunstalls, Sheldons of Scargill, Chichesters and Cliffords, and is now the seat of a cadet of that old Devonshire house whose shield of arms is found in half the churches of Northern Devon, and Chichester-Constable has succeeded Clifford-Constable.

The ancient mansion boasts that somewhere among its stones are the walls of a house of King Stephen's time, but, for the most part, it is Tudor and Jacobean brickwork, sadly defaced by restoration and counter-restoration. Towards the west and the east it shows long lines of roof and windows. The eastern front has the main entry, the centre crowned with a pediment which shelters the arms and supporters of the Constables. Turrets with cupolas jut at the ends, beyond which have been built out wings which make three sides of a quadrangle. The west front also is pointed with a pediment, above which the skyline is broken by a huddled trophy of banners, eagles, pikes, halberds and laurels surrounding the barred shield of Constable. The windows here, as on the other side of the house, have stone mullions and transoms, restored to them by the second baronet of the Clifford-Constable line, before whose time the old house-windows had been cut away to make room for disfiguring classicisms. To the south and north, where are the offices, antiquity has been less vexed by improving hands, and the use of differing building materials gives us some clue to the gradual growth of the house.

In "Stephen's tower" were collected the once famous collections of the Burton manuscript, among which old George Poulson, the historian of Holderness, wrought upon his book. Going round the wide bounds of the outer walls it is hard to assign dates to each wall and bay, but it is clear that Cuthbert Tunstall, when he succeeded to Burton in 1718, must have made changes at a time when the ancient house was probably in ill repair. He has left his mark for us clearly enough in the pierced work of the parapets above the bayed windows, which is formed of the C.C. of his initials. The arms over the east front show somewhat earlier changes, as they have the coronet of the Dunbars. Within doors the polite taste of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries has done havoc upon the rooms of an old English house. Doric pillars and pilasters, sham Tudor details, rococo mirrors, classical busts and statues, Chinese cornices and Wedgwood vases put out of countenance the ancestral faces of Constables, Tunstalls and Cliffords which look down from scores of frames. The room which in Poulson's days was the entry hall is now furnished as a dining-room, a double cube 60ft. by 30ft., something of the height being disguised by the vaulted cornice, the dwarf pilasters resting on brackets dividing the architrave into sixteen compartments, through five of

which another part of the house is lighted. Over the Doric columns of the mantel-piece is a shield of arms with the many quarterings of the Constables, the bearings inlaid in coloured mosaic, surrounded by carven boughs and swags, an oak panel under the mantel-shelf having the Bacchic panther. Portraits of Charles II. and James II. hang beside the fireplace, and beyond them in niches stand a marble Hercules leading Cerberus and a marble Demosthenes. Old portraits of Constable knights are here, with three of the Viscounts Dunbar and William Constable painted as Cato, his sister Winifred standing as Marcia. The little banners of arms hung upon the cornices recall a shrievalty of one of the lords of Burton. Another of our pictures shows the long gallery a vast room to which the grand staircase leads. The really beautiful relief of the cornice, with its vines, mermaids and sea monsters is imitated from the Bodley buildings at Oxford, and the garlands and pendants of the ceiling are an attempt at restoration of early



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SOUTH ENTRANCE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

stately old house celebrated by Michael Drayton, who had known its hospitality as

the Astons' ancient seat,
Which oft the Muse hath found her safe and sweet retreat.

To his house in Bath Thomas Hugh Clifford welcomed many of the French *émigrés*, the chief of them all remembering when on his throne his English host, and by special request of King Louis XVIII. Sir Thomas was given a baronetcy in the month before Waterloo. When in 1821 Sir Thomas added the Burton estate to that of Tixall this cadet of a West Country family found himself lord of two great domains. Master of two libraries, he lived much among his books and manuscripts, leaving a history of Tixall parish and a botanical essay on the "Flora Tixalliana," a translation of La Fontaine, and his collections for a history of the Normans. He died at Ghent in 1823, having taken the Constable surname and arms. His baronetcy was extinct with his grandson Sir Frederick Clifford-

work from a drawing. Tall vases of Florentine alabaster stand upon tables of verd-antique supported by eagles, and here are some high-backed English chairs of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century. The park of Burton, lying within a pale of more than five miles round, is for the most part flat Holderness land, but sweeping upward towards Roe Hill until a fair view is given of the wold towards the water of Humber. Its lake, sixteen acres of mere, has a wooded island peopled with wildfowl. "Capability Brown" was called here to lay out the grounds, and the French garden now casting back to wilderness may be seen in our picture of the west front with its statues and vases; here, too, in an earlier generation were aviaries of rare birds.

The Burton lands were long famous for the sport they could show their lords, who at one time stabled forty hunters beside their old hall with fifty couple of hounds in kennel. A herd of wild cattle like those at Chillingham roamed the park until a distemper killed them off in the middle of the eighteenth century. The fallow deer in the park numbered 500 head in Poulson's time, besides the eighty to ninety red deer which were hunted with the Burton hounds, and the chronicles of Burton fox-hunting tell how Reynard, flying through park and gardens,

once took refuge among the strange fripperies of the Chinese drawing-room.

For the following note on the title and privileges of the Lord Paramount of the Seignior of Holderness, we are indebted to Mr. Raleigh Chichester-Constable: "This title was originally in 1067 granted by William the Conqueror to Drogo. It was on various occasions at later times vested in the reigning Sovereigns, and by them granted to members of their families and others. Philip and Mary granted it to Henry Neville, Earl of Westmorland, who, dying *s.p.*, regranted it to Sir Henry Constable, who had married his sister. It was confirmed by charter in the reign of Charles II., and this as well as a former deed is in the muniment-room at Burton Constable. The title has ever since remained with the owners of Burton Constable, the present owner being the forty-fourth. During the eighteenth century a special Act of Parliament was passed to allow the King's writ to run in Holderness. There are still many privileges appertaining to the position, such as the appointment of the coroner for Holderness, certain seigniorial rights on the seacoast and on the banks of Humber, from Hull to Flamborough, together with extensive manorial rights."

TO OLIVIA.

BORN IN JANUARY.

White, colour of the pearl,
Of April petals and of morning mist,
White of the foam and surf,
White of the snow—
Be thine the hue about this baby-girl,
So tender now.

Green, colour of the leaf,
Of woodland pathway, sun and shadow kissed,
Green of the daisied turf,
Green of the lake—
Be there in shining dreams when doubt and grief
Her spirit shake.

Red, colour of the heart,
Of damask roses when the world's at June,
Red of the ripened vine,
Red of the blood—
Be thou aglow when first she plays her part
Of womanhood.

Blue, colour of the deep,
Of distant hills beneath the setting moon,
Blue of the dawn divine,
Blue of her eyes—
Be there to enwrap when old she falls asleep,
Smiling and wise.

LAWRENCE ALMA TADEMA.

THE FULFILMENT OF A DREAM.

OUTSIDE, the great trees swayed and creaked in the wind, as it blew in fierce gusts round the tiny country inn, and, the sullen clouds now breaking, the rain swept down in sheets. Truly it was a fearful night. At the sound of the wind, as it shrieked in the wide chimney, the two travellers pulled their cloaks closer about them and drew a little nearer to the blazing fire.

"Impossible to go on to Marseilles to-night!" muttered the younger man. He cast, as he spoke, an uneasy glance at his only travelling companion. Then he bit his lip with annoyance, for he felt that the other had intercepted his glance.

"*Mais, oui*," replied the other, smoothly, "it would, indeed, be a bad night for monsieur to travel. It would seem more practical for monsieur to stay the night here, and continue his journey . . . to-morrow."

There was a soft, lingering emphasis on the last word, which again stirred some inner consciousness in the younger man. He looked at the Frenchman with a sort of wonder.

"Well, I suppose I must make the best of it," he said, shortly.

"With a good fire, and good wine, the best is perhaps not so bad," replied the Frenchman. Then he raised his voice. "Marie! A bottle of your very best wine, and two glasses!" he called. Then, turning to his companion: "Would you like to have *les cartes*? No? Very good. Wine and glasses only, Marie."

"I shall require nothing more to-night," he added, as the girl brought in the wine and set it on the table. "And monsieur? *Non*? Well, Marie, you may retire."

As the girl left the room, he turned with a smile to the Englishman. "These country people," he said, "retire so early in the winter."

It was wonderful to see how his smile changed his whole face. The narrow grey eyes, which suggested, possibly, a touch of cruelty, became kindly, almost benevolent. The harsh, bitter expression on the stern face softened into sadness.

"A fine nature," thought the young man, "that has been through the fire, and come out blackened!"

Both men were great travellers, and they began to talk. They talked of wonderful Indian forests, of the vast loneliness

of the bush, and of the nameless fascination the great desert holds for men. Then the Frenchman glanced up at the clock.

"It is just upon twelve," he said, softly. "Midnight! It is a wonderful hour in all countries. . . . It was at midnight that once I awoke from a strange dream."

"What was it?" asked the younger man, somehow strangely fascinated, even against his will, by this high-bred Frenchman.

"It relates to a very painful period in my history," said the Frenchman, and indefinitely his manner changed. "Monsieur must know that I was born and bred an artist. From my very earliest years I had this love, this devotion for art, and fortunately I had leisure and means to cultivate my taste. From the time that I attained my majority, I gave myself up entirely to art. I painted, I studied all day, I neglected my health, I desired most earnestly to attain to the highest pinnacle of fame. So you see," he went on simply, "I had no time for love. Indeed, until I reached the age of fifty, I never gave a thought to love. One would think, monsieur, *à cet âge là*, one would be safe, but there is, as you say in your country, 'no fool like an old one,' and one day . . . I loved. I had never had this strange *maladie*, and I took it badly. Well, monsieur, we were married. She was as lovely a woman as one could find, and I adored her." He paused for an instant, and when he went on his voice was husky. "I worshipped her madly, blindly, and for years I was idiotically happy! There was no other woman in Paris, I thought, like my wife, so fresh, so dainty, so simple, so *fidèle*. Then one day I heard it, but I would not believe it. I swore that I would cut out the vile tongue! . . . I went home; I waited, I watched. By and by suspicion came into my mind, stayed and grew. She was only a child, monsieur, and one evening I forced her to confess."

He paused, and just for an instant his eyes rested on the younger man.

"It is a common story," said the Englishman, harshly, and he put down his glass with trembling fingers.

"*Mais, oui, monsieur!*" acquiesced the Frenchman. "It is as yet *bien banal*, but there is still a little more. I could not find out who had stolen her heart from me, until one night I had a strange dream. I dreamed that I was going home, monsieur, to our old flat where we had been so happy. I was mounting once more the old stairs; it was dark, monsieur, but I knew the way so well. I heard my wife's soft voice on the landing above me, and I heard her close the door, and then, monsieur, I dreamed that something came down the stairs. Our staircase there was upon the street, and as we crossed at the window—this something and I—I dreamed a light flashed up from the street, and I saw his face . . . and then . . . I awoke." He paused.

"And then?" said the Englishman.

"And then, monsieur," went on the old man, "I determined to find the man of my dream."

"Impossible!" muttered the younger man. Was the fellow mad? Such a strange light burned in his fierce grey eyes.

"After that, monsieur," he went on in a lighter tone, "I painted a little picture, quite a little picture, of that staircase that

I loved, and of that man who had crept so stealthily down it. *Et puis*, I set off on my travels looking for my man, and knowing that when I should confront him with that picture, I should know if it was he."

The Englishman drew out his handkerchief and wiped his brow.

"You are very realistic," he said. "I can almost see it. Did you find him?"

"Yes," said the Frenchman, "I found him, and showed him the picture."

"And . . . and what did he do?" asked the other, with something that sounded . . . was it like a faint sigh of relief?

"I could not, of course, kill a man in cold blood," said the Frenchman, with a shrug of his shoulders, "unarmed. I offered him his choice, swords or pistols. It would not have mattered to me which he chose," he said, with another shrug, and then suddenly he leant forward, "*I knew that I could kill him with either.*"

"And . . . ?" whispered the young man breathlessly.

"And . . ." went on the Frenchman, and then he checked himself. "But, monsieur, I will show you my little picture."

He got up, opened a case which was standing leaning against the wall near the fire, and brought out a small canvas.

"I spent much time on that," he said, holding it out.

"My God!" exclaimed the other, and involuntarily he glanced towards the door.

"It is very like you, is it not?" said the other, in a mocking voice. "You will run?"

Then, as the young man drew himself up proudly, he added: "I felt when first I saw you, monsieur, you would know how to die. An Englishman knows always how to do that. You will choose swords or pistols? I am, as I just told you, an expert with both."

Then, with a mocking laugh, he picked up a pistol. "I am, monsieur," he said with a profound bow, "what you have made me. 'Thou shalt not kill.' 'Thou shalt not commit adultery.' We are quits. If there is another world, monsieur, we may meet again." And then he fired.

JANE HARDY.

WILD COUNTRY LIFE.

HARES AT SEA.

SEVERAL times within the last few years I have known instances of hares, hard pressed by hounds, taking to the sea. On one occasion the hunted animal was actually killed by the pack in salt water. Twice in the last three years I have known hares escape altogether by thus betaking themselves to the dangerous sanctuary of the sea. In one instance puss evaded her pursuers by making her way down a steep chalk cliff, at the edge of which hounds were whipped off. But, not content with this precaution, the hare ran down to the sea, swam out, and landed further up the coast. In December last a pack of foot harriers with which I am acquainted ran their hare along the coast for some distance, and unaccountably lost her. After they had given her up and gone after another, a coastguard witnessed the curious sequel to the first chase. He saw the hunted animal swim in from the sea and land. She appeared to be violently sick, probably from the effects of swallowing salt water; she then cleaned herself thoroughly all over and went quietly on her way, having thus effectually thrown off her pursuers.

SNOWSTORMS AND WILD CREATURES.

It is difficult to account for the behaviour of the cats mentioned by a correspondent in last week's issue. I have no evidence of any special excitement among these animals in other parts of the country during the recent snowstorm. Our own cat betrayed no symptoms of any unusual occurrence during the snowfall. As regards the owl, its unusual state of excitement may very possibly have been caused by the snowfall, and by the passage of innumerable birds over and near the house. These disturbing influences may well have upset the normal equilibrium of the owl in question. Migration occurs among owls as among other birds, and something in the air may have told this particular bird that unusual events were happening. All sorts of theories have been evolved concerning migration; but the thoughts, instincts and ways of birds under this overpowering influence have never yet been satisfactorily explained; nor, in the nature of things, does it seem probable that they ever will be. It may, however, be pointed out that the tawny owl has a wide geographical range, and is found not only through a great part of Europe, but in North Africa, Palestine and, it is said, even as far as Tibet. Curiously enough, however, it does not occur in Ireland. The tremendously disturbing influences of the migratory period, even upon captive birds, are,



O. G. Pike.

A SHORT-EARED OWL AND ITS PREY.

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of course, well known. Quail, shut up in cages, will, during such times, dash themselves against the wires of their prisons throughout the night—at which time they are mostly accustomed to move during their flights—and this has been especially remarked during moonlight nights.

MIGRATION AMONG MAMMALS.

Even among the mammals, this overpowering instinct is perfectly well authenticated. The periodical movements of the lemming in Scandinavia are a familiar example, as are those of the caribou in Newfoundland. In South Africa the wonderful *Trek-bokken*, or migration of springboks, is still to be observed in the arid, waterless deserts of North-West Cape Colony. There the migration seems to be impelled largely by the overmastering necessity of finding a fresh food supply; but the instinct of the does (or ewes, as they call them in South Africa) to drop their fawns somewhere near the edge of the rainfall—too often lacking in Little Namaqualand and Bushmanland—has also, undoubtedly, a considerable share in these marvellous movements of feral life. The last great *Trek-bokken* took place in 1896, when millions of springboks moved steadily from west to east over an enormous area of country. During this period tens of thousands of the antelopes were shot by Trek-Boers and sportsmen without much appreciable effect on the legions of animals. Pastoral farms were completely denuded of vegetation, and the farmers had to remove their stock elsewhere. It was possible to see as many as half a million of the antelopes from one view-point, and the whole trek occupied a space of veldt reckoned at 138 miles by 15 miles.

A DISASTROUS THIRST MIGRATION.

Springboks are essentially to be classed among the desert-loving, thirst-resisting animals of Africa, of which the gemsbok, eland, hartebeest and giraffe are well-known examples. They can and do exist for long periods—weeks and months at a time—without drinking. But sometimes it happens that an overpowering desire to quench their thirst overtakes them. Some years ago, in this same arid veldt of North-West Cape Colony, this irresistible rage to drink seized upon the springbok herds of that region. With one accord they trekked, not eastward, as they usually do, but west until they reached the flat, sandy shores of Little Namaqualand and the Atlantic sea. They rushed into the salt water by tens of thousands, drank, and by tens of thousands died. For weeks thereafter a long line of these festering carcasses extended along the shore for thirty miles, and the stench was so insupportable that the Trek-Boers camped in the adjacent country

were driven far inland. This is fact and not fiction, and the incident occurred within the last quarter of a century. The wonders and the terrors of migration are, in truth, little known and understood, and the waste of life, when such events happen, whether among mammals or feathered creatures, is appalling.

THE RECENT BIRD MIGRATION.

The movement of birds from North to South and South-West during the recent frost and snowfall was certainly one of the greatest witnessed during the last twenty years. For three days in East Sussex vast flights were to be seen moving along the shore-line steadily westward. Wild geese and other fowl came in and, for the most part, passed on; but the main army was composed chiefly of plovers, green and golden, fieldfares, redwings, starlings, thrushes, blackbirds, larks and finches. I have never seen thrushes moving in such numbers as on Thursday and Friday, December 27th and 28th. I am told that they were equally numerous on Wednesday, the 26th. The migration seems to have expended itself in the uttermost limits of Cornwall, but large numbers of birds must have perished in the sea beyond. The movement was arrested as suddenly as it was impelled, and, thanks to warm rain and the quick melting of the snow, the hosts of birds were dispersing once again to their ancient haunts.

THE FEEBLE REDWING.

During the cold snap redwings, as usual, seemed to me far less capable of resisting the influences of snow and frost than any other birds. Some of the small birds were, it is true, very hard put to it; but upon the whole, even during this very brief spell of wintry weather, the redwings were more reduced and more tamed than any other species. On the East Sussex shore and marshland they sat about in abject misery, and one could have several times destroyed them with a stick. Neither fieldfares, thrushes nor blackbirds were reduced to anything like the same state of weakness; the common and missel thrushes, indeed, pressed forward boldly upon the wing, and seemed only anxious to employ their strength in getting westward. Of all the thrushes, in fact, the redwing, although it nests in Scandinavia and the northern Palearctic region, as far eastward as the Yenesei Valley in Siberia, seems least able to resist the numbing and starving influences of hard weather. And even although these birds will often come into a town or village during snow and frost, they seem unable to pick up a living, as do thrushes, blackbirds, robins and other common species, from the food set out for them by kindly human folk.

H. A. B.

ALPINE SCENERY IN WINTER.

IT is a truism that those who have not visited Switzerland except during the summer season have not seen more than a bare half of its beauties; and now that skaters and tobogganers have opened up the country in winter, the appreciation of Alpine scenery in its robe of snow is beginning to receive its proper meed of attention. After all, the

most enthusiastic tobogganer or skater must pause now and then in his sport and spare a moment to survey the features of the marvellously beautiful valleys in which his favourite resorts are situated. Whenever he does so, he must necessarily be struck by the curious contrast which the landscape presents to any rural landscape in England or Scotland. The landscapes of the



W. Muir.

A SWISS VILLAGE.

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high Alps, in fact, have a charm of their own; a charm which is all the more noticeable when compared with that of our own mountains and dales. It is due to quite different causes. To mention only one: at home, even in midwinter, there is always some faint atmosphere, some thin veil of mist, which interposes a pale grey or bluish haze between the eye of the spectator and the distant horizon of downs or woodlands at which he is gazing. He is, so to speak, made aware of the air. He literally sees it, lying in layers, perhaps, almost like smoke. Even when, in particularly dry or high districts, these visible layers are absent, an invisible atmosphere is realised by the simple circumstance that objects in varying planes retreat behind each other in perspective. Now the lack of this perspective is exactly one of the most insistent points about an Alpine scene in winter—insistent by its absence. A chain of hills twenty miles away stands back hardly at all from the ridge of pine trees not 100yds. off; and it is only by a definite effort of reasoning that one estimates distances at all. One has to look for signs of life on the hills—a chalet, a woodman hauling his sleigh through the snow, or what not, to grasp any sense of perspective. Only when snow is falling does

of atmosphere which has been here commented upon. Clear though the average Alpine panorama is in summer, it is still clearer on an average day in winter. In summer clouds hang round the peaks (thunder in their origin as a rule), rain falls with comparative frequency, the high snows are melting more or less continuously and filling the air with moisture, and the tremendous heat of the sun causes a myriad currents of wind to blow through gorge and valley, producing various forms of damp condensation, all of which inevitably evolves those haze-wreaths so beloved of painters, and so disliked by tourists who have toiled to some view-point and find their view dimmed and indistinct. In winter the same natural laws act in such a way as to produce a reverse effect. The fierce frosts prevent dampness, and as obviously the higher one goes the harder the frost, the higher one goes the less humidity one may expect. Thus in the high Alps clouds are, broadly speaking, unknown; at least, such clouds as will occur on the same Alps in a wet summer. The frost has automatically dried up the dampness with which they would have been formed. When they do form, they dissolve not in rain but in snow, and snow cleanses



W. Muir.

FARMS IN SNOW TIME.

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"atmosphere," as we know it at home, visit these frigid vales; and then the air, filled with thick, silent flakes, resembles more an actual fog than the opalescent haze which is typical of an English winter day.

The writer speaks, of course, of the higher valleys of the Alps; such valleys as the Prättigau, the Landwasser Thal (in which the famous health resort of Davos Platz is situated), the Engadine at St. Moritz and the side plateaux of the Rhone Valley at Montana. In the lowlands of Switzerland a good deal of damp and cloudiness prevails in winter, and passing through them in the train one catches glimpses of landscapes in thaw which only the architecture of the cottages and the presence of vineyards distinguish from similar landscapes west of the Channel. These lowlands, however, are unsuitable for winter holiday-making, and therefore do not attract our countrymen abroad. At an altitude of from 4,000ft. and upward, frost is practically permanent from December until the beginning of March, and the snow remains unmelted even later. Partly owing to the altitude, partly to the frost, but mainly (though few realise this) to the remoteness from the sea, extreme dryness prevails, and it is this which causes the clarity

the air through which it descends much as a fine sieve or filter might cleanse a dirty liquid. And while the sun's heat in winter is often astonishingly high, wind remains a negligible factor in the local weather calculations. Except when the dreaded föhn (breeze from the south) crosses the Alps, and brings the Mediterranean's unhealthy breath, the high valleys of which we are writing enjoy almost perfect stillness.

For these reasons, probably, the first thing that strikes the newcomer to a high Alpine resort in winter is the novel and, one might say, the rather harsh absence of atmosphere. Mountains and precipices and pine trees are cut out with a sharp precision that is oddly reminiscent at times of the pasteboard scenery of a theatre. The sun, blazing down from a hard blue sky, throws shadows of tropical distinctness on the smooth surface of the drifted snow. The far-off peaks do not hang mysteriously in upper mists, as in summer, but seem to be carved in relief against the sky, which is not spread above them, but lying as a tinted background behind them. And, however remote these peaks may be, they are not in the least degree less distinct, their folds and gullies are not less visible, than the detail of the white meadows or the group of chalets in the near foreground. The

writer is living at present at the little village of Klosters, which nestles in a sheltered part of the Prättigau Valley at the point where the Rhaetian railway traverses a "saddle" to reach Davos. During the perfect week which preceded Christmas he had ample opportunity of observing this ever-fresh and ever-surprising effect. At the top of the valley rise the peaks which shut off Switzerland from the Tyrol; at the bottom the long line of lower, but hardly less impassive, mountains which lie beyond Ragatz. The village of Klosters is perhaps eight miles from the former and fifteen or twenty from the latter; yet both seem equally near, and both look within an easy hour's walk. Even on the one cloudy afternoon which we have had lately, the hills did not recede. They were as distinct as ever; for though their snow skylines faded, the vast forests on their flanks stood out bold and black as ever, and continued the illusion of nearness.

In the dip of the valley there runs a small stream which every morning exhibits a very typical Alpine phenomenon. For many miles of its length a sort of scarf of fog, strangely sharp-edged, follows it, till the sun comes up. A dozen feet from the edge of the stream the fog ceases; above the stream it is so thick that the water itself is often invisible. It is due to the extreme cold. The temperature of the air is so excessively low that that of the glacier water is, by comparison, warm; and a mist is formed by condensation. Walking into this mist, one finds that it is composed of minute but distinct particles of frost floating in the air. Each particle is a perfect crystal, and should one be so fortunate as to be in time to catch the first rays of the risen sun piercing through them, the effect of these dancing motes of diamond is inexpressibly beautiful. Occasionally this mist deposits itself upon the overhanging branches of trees, and builds itself up into very perfect rime, sometimes an inch or more deep. This, however, is usually dispersed by a few minutes of sunshine; and as Klosters, like the other Alpine resorts, is situated with a view to obtain the maximum possible duration of sun, the rime is seen in its perfection by few. A curious property of the rime is that, though it seems to melt visibly, it leaves no wetness behind. The fact is that it does not melt, but evaporates.

The absence of insect-life is another interesting feature of the landscapes of the high Alps in winter. Here in the Prättigau gnats and butterflies and other winged creatures flit all day long in summer. In winter no eye but that of the searching naturalist could detect any trace of them. As far as insect-life is concerned, the valley is silent. Every wild creature seems to be asleep. Many years ago, when the writer first came to Switzerland in winter, he searched in vain for spiders' webs, of which he had been asked to obtain photographs. It seemed to him that in so frosty a region as this he would be able to get pictures of webs far more beautiful than those that had been taken in England, where it is the naturalist photographer's delight to sally forth almost before daylight on cold autumn mornings to seek for webs with the pearls of crystal or dew clinging to them and making them visible. He sought fruitlessly. Within the houses an occasional web may be seen, left by a careless *zimmer-madchen*; outside they do not survive at all. If they did, no flies would be caught in them, for no flies can live in this tremendous cold; and the spider which spun its snare where no prey could ever be entrapped in it would be foolish indeed. Of birds, too, there are few. A twittering flock of sparrows appears to patronise Klosters, presumably for the food which can be picked up outside the chalet doors. There are sparrows, too, at Davos. But nowhere at this altitude in Switzerland can one expect to see the great variety of birds which a wooded country such as this would harbour in England all the winter through. The loss is a serious one. Nevertheless, the sight of our home birds trying to pick up a living in these bleak and shelterless regions would not be a pleasant one to any sympathetic bird-lover.

The lack of atmosphere has been spoken of at an earlier point in these random notes. The lack of colour—which is partly due to the lack of atmosphere—is no less remarkable. In a valley such as this, it is literally the fact that only a single colour is visible when one looks forth from one's window at any moment of the day. That colour is the blue of the sky. Of landscape colours there is none. The snow, of course, is white; and though its crystals harbour the whole spectrum, they do not reveal its tints except when examined in detail. The rocks which rise through the snow are black—or grey, which is half black. The pine trees are black likewise. Only when one is quite close to a pine does one perceive its greenness, or a touch of brown from its cones. Viewed at a slight distance, the pine forests, flung wide as far as eye can reach, are simply black; and the leafless larches among the pines are, of course, black also. As for the peasants' chalets, it is no exaggeration to say that they are black too. Built originally of unpainted pine wood, the sun has burnt them to so deep a brown (surely the most beautiful brown in the world) that, like the forests, they strike an approximately black note in the snow. Black, white and blue—these alone are visible in a high Alpine landscape in winter; and on a sunshiny day the simplicity of the colour scheme and the brilliant absence of atmosphere produce an effect reminiscent of the boldest efforts of one of our modern poster artists. In fact, some of the posters

advertising Swiss pleasure resorts which have recently appeared on London's hoardings, blatant though they may seem, represent the truth. They are a faithful reproduction of Nature, and those who only know winter as it visits us in sea-girt England, and may doubt the possibility of such colouring, have to visit the Alps in winter to find out how limited their knowledge of Nature's monochrome effects may be.

WARD MUIR.

FROM THE FARMS.

FARM BUTTER-MAKING.

IN the new number of the Journal of the Board of Agriculture, Mr. T. R. Robinson and Mr. C. W. Walker-Tisdale give some very practical directions for making butter on farms. They only recommend it when there is no remunerative sale for milk, and when the butter can be sold retail at a good price. The cow that they recommend is the Jersey or Guernsey, which ought to produce 11b. of butter from 15lb. to 20lb. of milk, whereas Devons, Keries and Dexters require from 20lb. to 24lb. of milk, and shorthorns, Welsh, redpolls and Ayrshires from 23lb. to 30lb. of milk. Emphasis is laid on the need in the dairy for an ample supply of pure cold water, as without this contamination is inevitable. The directions for churning, washing, salting, making and marketing it would be impossible to summarise, but to those who wish to obtain a little treatise on butter-making on a small scale this article can be thoroughly recommended.

FRUIT ON A SMALL FARM.

A correspondent whose balance-sheet on a small holding in Surrey we gave in these columns of October 20th last, now writes to us as follows, in regard to his fruit: "When stock was taken last summer my fruit trees and bushes consisted of the following:

Bush apples	...	366	Quince	...	1
Plums	...	101	Nuts	...	35
Pears	...	12	Gooseberries	...	728
Damsons	...	336	Black currants	...	748
Cherry	...	1	Red currants	...	119
Walnuts	...	2			
			Total	...	2,449

Besides these there are about 3,000 strawberry plants in the second year of fruiting, and about 250 raspberries. The bush apples are on paradise stock. This stock was purchased in preference to the crab, because the field in which I planted my $2\frac{1}{4}$ acres of fruit trees and bushes had only been ploughed at the shallow depth customary at most farms, and, therefore, gave an insufficient amount of available plant food for the deep roots. These bushes were planted on ground which had been cropped with its third year of rye grass and clover, and on being ploughed the buried clover formed an excellent nitrogenous manure; the fruit bushes are now five years old, and look remarkably healthy, and even last year, in spite of the drought, made vigorous growth. The varieties of apple bushes planted are as follows:

Worcester Pearmain	Gascoyne's Scarlet
Lane's Prince Albert	Bismarck
Cox's Orange Pippin	Lord Derby
Lady Sudeley	Lord Grosvenor
King of the Pippins	Wellington
Beauty of Bath	Court Pendu Plat
Scarlet Nonpareil	Pott's Seedling

Of these I have found Worcester Pearmain, Lane's Prince Albert and Scarlet Nonpareil the most prolific fruiters on this soil. Cox's Orange Pippin has not done very well, which I imagine is due to the exposed site of the fruit plantation. To break the force of the south-west winds which sweep across here with an unbridled ecstasy and fiendish delight, I planted some poor, thin poplars. To this row of poplars I added half-standard plums, and at the back of the house, to check the force of the north wind, an avenue of damsons. Cob nuts, curiously enough, have done very badly, although they grow remarkably well in the hedges. The plum crop utterly failed last year owing to the late spring frosts. Gooseberries have been the most certain of the soft fruits, for they do not suffer so severely from the depredations of birds as do currants and strawberries. It should be borne in mind that out of the 728 bushes, 400 were planted only last autumn, and the other bushes are but four to five years old. I have planted two varieties only, Whinham's Industry and Crown Bob, and pick them green, which is not only the most profitable manner of cropping, but relieves young bushes from the heavy burden of ripening their fruit. The average price obtained for green gooseberries was 5d. a quart. Whinham's Industry is the most prolific, and Crown Bob the largest. As I consider the soil unsuitable for red currants, I planted only 119 of these. They have, however, grown and fruited splendidly, and if it had not been for the merciless voracity of the birds last summer I should have had a most profitable crop. I saved enough for home consumption by covering the bushes with muslin mullers which had once shrouded the naked carcasses of Colonial sheep. The soil being especially adaptable for black currants, I planted 748 of them. Of these, 248 were Naples, and were of a clean stock, but the remaining stock of 500 I, unfortunately, bought from a much-advertised Kent firm given to a great deal of trade bragging, and they were simply smitten with the black mite. Nearly all the diseased branches had been cut off when they arrived, and my cursory examination on arrival at night did not reveal much amiss. However, had they fruited even freely I am afraid it would have made very little difference to me, as the birds took the whole crop, such as it was. These 500 bushes were Baldwins. As to the price I gave for two year old fruit trees and bushes, I found that it would have been extravagant to pay the prices quoted in the catalogues of most nurserymen. By insisting on

being put on the same footing as large growers, I managed to obtain gooseberry bushes and currant bushes at 10s. per 100, and apple trees for 65s. per 100. I bought 50 standard plum trees for 25s., and for 3,000 strawberry runners I only gave 12s., plus carriage. I purchased 100 American blackberry canes, but they died, with the exception of two or three plants. This was a loss of 30s. My most hopeful crop in the way of soft fruit was that of strawberries. From the 3,000 Royal Sovereign plants I managed to make £6 os. 6d. after paying for the runners. They had to be severely netted, but I have not charged this as an item, as the netting was a present. My aching back, however, makes me admit that a great deal of labour in the form of constant hoeing was spent on the bed. I did not heavily manure the bed, for it was made after a crop of early potatoes which had received a dressing of farmyard manure had been dug up. Beyond this dressing of manure the strawberries received nothing but a mulch of straw taken out of the calf-shed. The price I got for the first fortnight's picking was 6d. per pound from a peripatetic greengrocer living four miles away. These strawberries I picked about 4.30 a.m. into peck and half-bushel baskets, and sent

them off in a cart which was passing the greengrocer's shop every morning. With the few Paxtons I had I could only make 4d. per pound, as they came a fortnight later than the Royal Sovereigns. Last autumn I planted several thousand more runners, taken from this bed between the rows of apples and gooseberries, on ground which in the summer was growing peas and early potatoes and carrots and beets. I gave these newly-planted rows a dressing of pig manure, and hoed in some basic slag in the autumn, recent experiments having proved the efficacy of this valuable artificial manure. Most of the fruit trees and bushes were dressed with the manure which had accumulated from the cow-shed during the winter; this manure, having been kept under the shelter of a galvanised roof, was of excellent quality. Most of the liquid manure which drained from the cow-shed into a tank was applied round the gooseberry bushes, for they are gross feeders. To the cesspool, which receives only sink water, I have had a pump with hose fitted, and shall in future pump the liquid contents on to the adjacent strawberry bed. On a calculation last summer I estimated the value of my fruit trees at £90, and the trees and bushes cost me only £45."

SHOOTING.

SHOOTING POSITIONS.—I.

By F. E. R. FRYER.

WE have always had it instilled into us since childhood that we should know the difference between right and wrong, and we may take it that this maxim applies to everything in life, to every pursuit whether for pleasure or profit. That it is important in the former there is no gainsaying, as no one could become great as a cricketer or golfer or, for the matter of that, at any game of skill without going to work in the right way, and I think there is no question that this applies in every way to "shooting," the present subject. This article will endeavour to explain to its readers what the writer considers the best style, and to show in the accompanying photographs the positions taken up by some of the very best shots of the present day while actually shooting; and such "action" photographs give, of course, a far better idea than any that are taken when the subject is posing for the purpose. There is no doubt that, to be in a proper position for shooting, not only must the arms, hand and eye be in the right place, but also the legs and feet, so that all parts of the body may work in harmony, and produce that easy swing of the gun on to the object aimed at which is so essential to success.

To begin at the "bed-rock," it is a good plan for the shooter in taking his stand according to the direction from which he expects the game to come, either in driving or covert-shooting, to have his left foot slightly in advance of his right; this will enable him to swing much more easily to the right (which is the more difficult side to turn quickly to) when a change in the position of the feet is necessary than if he stands quite square, and in my opinion, except in cases when a bird comes very low, straight over his



W. A. Rouch.

A PERFECT POSITION.

Copyright.



ONE OF THE STRAIGHT-ARMED SCHOOL.

head (when an absolute turn round is required), it is the proper plan to pivot on one's hips, raising slightly the right or left heel, according to the side on which the bird is passing. This will enable the shooter to swing back to his original position, facing the line the birds are coming from, much more quickly and easily than if the feet are altogether moved. In this respect it is always a help, when standing on rough ground, to stamp it down so as to get a level place to stand on. There is no doubt that one has to think of these little things much more as one grows older. The late Duke of Rutland, uncle of the present Duke, a tremendously keen shooter whom no weather ever turned back, in his later days always had a small wooden platform taken from place to place for him to stand on. I also think that it is a mistake to stand with feet too far apart, but that they should be as near together as you can manage while keeping a good balance. This pivoting of the body without changing the position of the feet is clearly seen in one of the photographs shown. Next to be considered is the upper part of the body, the position of the arms and head in regard to the gun when aiming, so that the latter can be moved quickly and easily in a line between the eye and the object aimed at, and the hand respond to the former at the crucial moment. To work all this out comfortably and successfully, there is very little doubt that a good style has a great advantage over a bad one, and I do not think I can explain what this style should be better than by asking the readers of this to carefully study the position of Lord de Grey in the photograph, "A Perfect Position." Everyone is well acquainted with the results of his shooting, but it is seldom one finds a better illustration of the way it is done than is depicted in this photograph, taken at the very moment of firing. It is a position I thoroughly endorse, and I flatter myself in thinking

that it is not very unlike that taken up by myself. I should like to point out that the left arm is not at full length up the barrel, as is advocated by some. It stands to reason that with the elbow slightly bent and brought more or less under the barrels of the gun, a much firmer rest is assured, and the gun is capable of far quicker alignment than when the arm is outstretched; and, moreover, in a long rise it is less tiring to the arm. I like to see the fingers of this hand well round the barrel and holding it firmly. The right elbow is slightly depressed, which also helps to support the gun. With regard to the crucial moment referred to, when the hand has to obey the eye, what an important moment this is! It is this movement, the hand obeying the eye, that in my opinion makes one man a better shot than another, and explains why a great shot is born not made. One shooter may be quite as good a judge of distance and of pace as the other, and shoot in as good



W. A. Rouch. SHOOTING TO LEFT WITHOUT MOVING THE FEET. Copyright.

of the birds. How often one sees guns who, having shot brilliantly at birds coming down wind, when the drive is reversed make a very bad show. You hear them remark that they shot in front of the birds; they were coming so slow. I do not say that this is not so sometimes with some shooters, but the far greater number shoot behind them, and I hold a theory that the slower an object moves, the greater is the tendency to shoot behind it. The eye watches the object moving slowly, and the hand is slower still in responding to the eye. I have added these

remarks to show that, even if the very best style is acquired, there will always be some men who come to the forefront, and no copying of their way of doing it will make up for that which was not born in their imitators. In another photograph is shown a shooter of the straight-armed school, but it somehow does not look comfortable, and I hope he will forgive me in saying I think the position wrong. The other photographs shown are all of good shots; their positions vary somewhat, from: the too-squared right elbow of the one, to the (as some would say) too-bent left elbow of the other. Of the latter shooter it has often been said that he did everything well in an unorthodox style. The last photograph shown is that of a very well-known shooter in a position of ease, and it is a valuable



Rouch. RIGHT ELBOW TOO SQUARE. Copyright.

style, but just that lack of unison between the different parts of the body makes all the difference. How often one hears a shooter after several misses explain that his eye is not very straight to-day! His eye sees straight enough, but his nervous system is all wrong, and the different parts of his body are not working as a whole. And this is why a man born with a brain having absolute and unvarying control over his body must always excel at any sport or game where hand and eye working together is the chief desideratum. The want of this control is very noticeable sometimes when there is a sudden change in the pace



GOOD, BUT LOADER TOO FAR BEHIND.

illustration of the proper position spectators should take up, especially in the case of partridge-driving, *i.e.*, close up and in a line right behind the shooter. It is altogether wrong to allow anyone to sit in the fence in front of a gun; it is not only balking to him and the guns on either side, but very dangerous as well.



W. A. Rouch "AT REST." PROPER POSITION OF SPECTATOR.

Copyright.

In another article I propose to treat of the position of the loader to his master, a very important subject, both with regard to safety and to the comfort of the shooter generally.

RIGHT CHOICE OF STAGS FOR SHOOTING.

A SMALL storm in a teacup has been raised by our quotation of the remark of certainly one of the most experienced and sapient of the professional stalkers in the Highlands, that stags ought to be shot when they become fully grown. He was speaking, of course, for what he conceived to be the general good of the forest and of the stock raised on it, and his object in recommending this unrestrained slaughter of the adults was to avoid the ill effects of inbreeding. It is, in some ways, a gallant position to take up, because it is so

directly contrary to all that has been considered for a long time the very best opinion. For years the cry has been that forests are being ruined by the killing off of the best heads, and the doctrine has been gaining ground greatly (how far it is carried into practice is a different story) that the salvation of the deer or, at all events, the arrest of their deterioration is to be achieved, if at all, mainly or largely by sparing the best stags to be fathers of a future stock as good as themselves.

A PROFESSIONAL STALKER'S OPINION.

It is with full knowledge of this theory, and with deliberate intent to express his opposition to it, that the stalker in question makes his statement as to the advantage of killing the stags when they become fully grown. What he means by this (Gaelic is his natural tongue, though he speaks English perfectly) is in all probability no more than that there is no advantage to the forest in sparing a good stag, and that there is positive disadvantage to it in sparing the same good stag year after year, as is advocated so often. Say a stag comes to his prime at seven, he will probably (they differ individually) remain there for about four years, then he will begin to go back. The stalker whose opinion, contrary to that of the general, we have quoted, would probably put it that no stag should be allowed to live till eleven, and that the more killed at eight years of age the better. That appears to be a fair statement of his view.

RESULT OF PREVIOUS EXPERIMENTS.

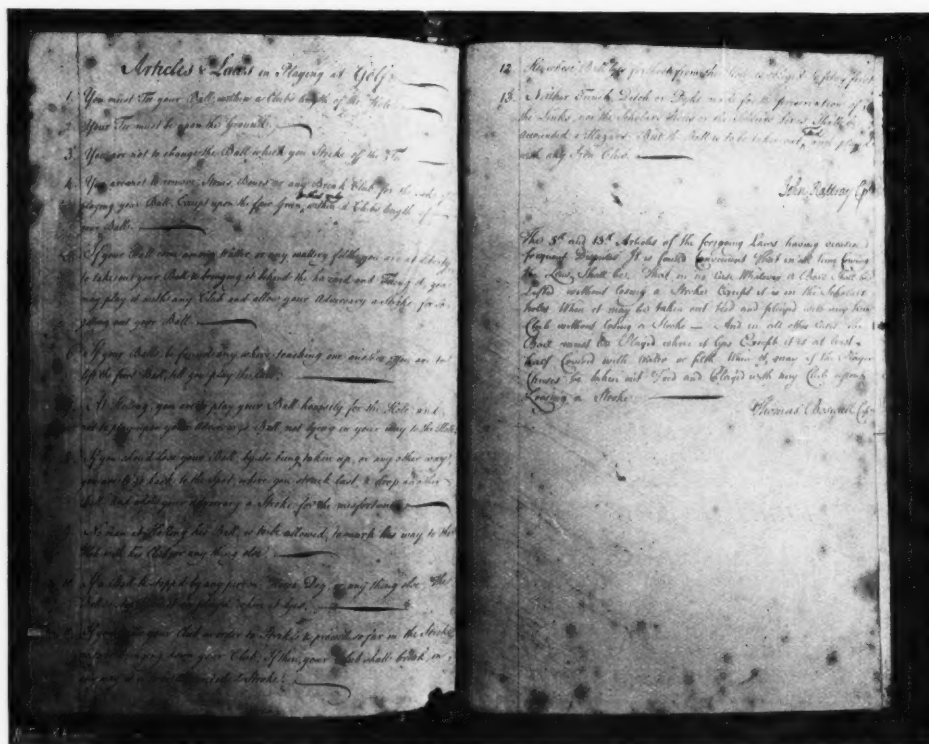
Such experiments as have been made in sparing the good stags, and have been continued long enough and watched closely enough for any lessons at all to be drawn from them (lessons, that is to say the real connections between causes and effects, are very difficult to learn in these cases), seem to show that the bodies of the deer benefit from it more than the heads—perhaps that the heads do not benefit at all. The heads, it is probable, are more directly affected by the feeding. The Duke of Westminster's forest, the Reay, is one where this lesson seems to have been taught. Heads, however, appear to be improved, beyond doubt, by the process of shooting off bad sires, especially stags carrying bad heads, switch-horns and hummels. There are many forests on which the improved heads certainly seem to bear witness to the virtue of a continued ruthless system of killing the least fit. Perhaps the safest conclusion to arrive at is that our knowledge about it is very slight in comparison with all that there remains to know. If we can arrive at that modest conviction we shall, at all events, not make mistakes through hurrying on too rapidly to put our conclusions into practice.

ON THE GREEN.

THE HONOURABLE THE EDINBURGH COMPANY OF GOLFERS.

THE origin of the Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers is shrouded in the mists of antiquity, but it seems fairly certain that the club, in its early days known as "The Gentlemen Golfers" of Leith, is considerably older than its oldest extant record. The earliest minute that survives bears the date 1744, and the Company can therefore fairly lay claim to at least the second place in point of antiquity among British golf clubs, though the same claim is upheld by the Edinburgh Burgess Club, which is the proud possessor of a charter of even date with that of the Honourable Company, both having been incorporated by the Edinburgh magistrates in 1800. The earliest record of the Edinburgh Burgess Club, however, only takes that institution back to 1773, though 1735 is supposed to be the year of its birth. The minute books of the Honourable Company afford some interesting and amusing reading. Quaint light is shed upon the social and convivial aspects of the game, as enjoyed by "Gentlemen Golfers" of a century ago. There is, for instance, frequent mention of fines to the extent of "a pint of wine," or "two tappit hens," and so forth (what a Scots lawyer would call "liquid" penalties), for breaches of the traditions and customs of the club. For the guidance of the Southern reader it should, perhaps, be explained that a "tappit hen" means a measure of claret, containing three

magnums or Scots pints; that is, about three English quarts. The participle originally referred to the crest on the head of a certain variety of domestic fowl; hence the expression came to denote a liquid measure with a similar knob on its lid; and



THE RULES OF GOLF 163 YEARS AGO.

hence the present usage. Indeed, for a graphic revelation of the social condition of Scotland in the eighteenth century there is scarcely more valuable material available for the historian than the old minute books of the golf clubs. It was the period in Scottish history so well described by Scott in "Waverley," the period when the loyalty of Scotsmen was wavering between allegiance to the Jacobite or Hanoverian cause. That the "golfers" of the Honourable Company came within the influence of the throbbing and troublous times of the Jacobite Rising in 1745 is apparent from the fact that there is a gap in the record of the club minutes from April 1st, 1745, to March 18th, 1748. The gathering of the Highland clans, their march Southwards, their camping in and around Edinburgh in attendance on Prince Charlie at Holyrood Palace, apparently put an end for a time to the peaceful single and foursome matches on Leith links. But the entries of the secretaries in the records do not reveal so much the transaction of serious and grave business as the gay and humorous side of golfing conviviality. Quite unconsciously, the penman of three brief lines reveals with the suddenness of an electric flash the buoyant social side in the old manner of playing the game. Take, for example, one or two brief entries. In the "Bett Book" for January 4th, 1766, it is written: "It is understood that no match shall be plaed (*sic*) for more than one hundred merks on the day's play, or one guinea the round. Each person who lays a Bett in company of the Golfers, and shall fail to play it on the day appointed, shall forfeit to the Company a pint of wine for each guinea, unless he give a sufficient excuse to their satisfaction." In the same year there is an entry which shows how exacting the old race of golfers were in insisting that the ceremonial garb of the club should be worn by the players when on the links, especially on competition days. It runs, under the date of November 16th, 1766: "This day Lieutenant James Dalrymple, of the 43rd Regiment, being convicted of playing five different times at Golf without his uniform, was fined only in Six pints, having confessed the heinousness of his crime. At his own request he was fined of Three pints more." It is interesting also to compare the staple drink of the old golfer with the whisky and soda and beer of his descendant to-day. In 1782 it was gravely laid down in the minutes of the Company: "That Port and Punch shall be the ordinary Drink of the Society unless upon these days when the silver club and cups are played for. At those meetings Claret or any other Liquor more agreeable will be permitted."

The uniform about which the "Gentlemen Golfers" were so punctilious, and which, with certain changes of shape, their successors may wear, if they choose, to-day, consisted of a scarlet coat with blue cloth collar and club buttons, and a blue cloth cap. Members were also in the habit of dining together, the captain of necessity in uniform, about once a week, which pious rite has its modern counterpart in the monthly dinners of the Honourable Company, which take place in Edinburgh each winter. At first these social gatherings were held at a tavern called Luckie Clephan's, close to the Leith links. In 1768 the dinners were held in the Company's own club-house there. Owing to Leith links failing to attract players, as well as to changes in the neighbourhood, the club sold its furniture and club-house in 1831, and apparently there was a suspension of the Company as a golf institution. But in 1836 the old organisation was revived, and the players left Leith and made Musselburgh their home green. The most regrettable result of the interregnum was the enforced sale of the Company's effects. Could the golfers have tided over those five years of difficulty, they would now be the richer by several valuable pictures and other interesting and historic mementoes. In 1865 a club-house was built at Musselburgh, but soon that green also became unsuitable, and the Company made its final move, in 1891, to Muirfield, where the new private green was

opened in May, and the new club-house in December of that year.

The first entry in the Company's oldest record book is one of considerable interest, and forms the subject of one of our illustrations. It relates to the gift by the Edinburgh magistrates of a silver club to be played for annually by all comers, not only by "Gentlemen Golfers," under regulations proposed by the latter and accepted by the Town Council. The entry money was 5s., and we read that "The Crowns given in at signing are solely to be at the disposal of the Victor." In addition to this more substantial reward, the winner got the temporary custody of the club; for Rule VI. demands "caution" (*Anglicé* security) to the tune of £50 sterling, for redelivery of it one month before the next annual competition. Rule IX. declares that the victor shall be styled "CAPTAIN OF THE GOLF," and appoints him, along with two or three colleagues, arbiter of all "disputes touching the Golf among Golfers."

In the accompanying illustration of the Company's clubs, the oldest—the 1744 club—is the lowest; the other two have been presented by the magistrates since that date, that at the top as recently as 1880. Among the regulations just referred to, it is enacted that "Every Victor is to append a Gold or Silver

piece, as he pleases, to the Club, for the year he wins." This has always taken the shape of a ball; and as it is customary for the Captain of the Company (the club is no longer an award of merit) to affix a silver copy of a ball of outstanding popularity, these trophies form a useful and instructive monument of the evolution of the golf ball as we know it.

The history of the Silver Club Competition does not call for much comment. It only remained open to all comers for about twenty years, as in January, 1764, we find the magistrates in council assenting to a petition, signed by "Captains of the Golf," that it should thereafter be confined to members of the Company of Golfers. The petitioners also crave to be allowed to admit to membership of the Company "such Noblemen or Gentlemen as they approve of." It is worth noticing that in 1754 "several Gentlemen of the county of Fife" presented a similar trophy to be played for every year at St. Andrews, and this fact may have helped to bring about the change mentioned.

The excerpt from the minute book consists of a rather quaint set of rules of the game, presumably binding only upon "Gentlemen Golfers," and evidently compiled between the years 1744 and 1747, during which Mr. Rattray, an Edinburgh surgeon, who won the silver club in the first two years of its existence, was

captain of the band of golfers at Leith. The postscript altering Laws V. and XIII. must have been added in 1758, the year of Mr. Thomas Boswall's captaincy. One of these old rules reads: "You must Tee your Ball, within a Club's length of the Hole." This seems to point to a very primitive state of green-keeping, as well as a deficient amount of "fair green." There is a mythical player for whose benefit the customary notice "Replace the turf" had to be altered so as to read "Returf the place"; to have this gentleman ploughing a teeing ground 4ft. from the hole can hardly have facilitated accurate putting. But perhaps he was not a "Gentleman Golfer."

The other awards of the Company are medals, of which it at present possesses seven in gold, and one very large one of silver. There are two medal competitions in the year at Muirfield, one on the first Saturday in April, the other on the last Saturday in October. The illustration represents the face and reverse of the Company's oldest gold medal, which bears the date 1823; but minutes of 1790 record the institution of a gold medal competition in that year, and the delivery of the medal to its first winner. The remaining photograph is a copy of a very fine portrait of one John Taylor, seven times captain of the Company between 1807 and 1825. The picture hangs in the spacious dining-hall of



MR. JOHN TAYLOR, SEVEN TIMES CAPTAIN.

the club-house at Muirfield (which is at present undergoing considerable enlargement and alteration), and though reputed to be the work of Sir Henry Raeburn, it is with more justice attributed to his pupil, Sir John Watson Gordon. The famous Scottish portrait painter was a prominent member of the Company, and he painted for the club the portrait of at least one of his fellow-members—the renowned "Singing Jamie Balfour."

LONDON FOURSOMES TOURNAMENT. THE first round of the London Foursomes Tournament has been concluded, and perhaps the most noteworthy fact in connection with it is that Mayo and Saunders suffered defeat at the hands of Catlin and Wilson at Berkhamsted. There is no doubt that this tournament would have been very much more interesting to the general public if Braid, Taylor, Var'ou and Herd had been taking part in it. It is no less certain that their participation would have made the whole thing very much less interesting to the great body of the competitors. I do not know why they did not enter—it may have been in virtue of a self-imposed kind of self-denying ordinance, in order that the less-known men might have a chance; or, again, it may be just that their engagements were too many, and that the carcase was not big enough to draw the biggest eagles. Anyhow, as the thing went, Mayo's name was perhaps the best known of those that appeared on the list, and his defeat the most notable point about the first round. It appears that he is leaving his place at Chipstead, which will accordingly be vacant for some other applicant, but whether he will go to Aldeburgh, as was said at first, is doubtful now, and there is an idea that he will find an appointment at a green near London. The Aldeburgh course itself is one which would be more appreciated if its merits were better known. It is also true that if it became better known and proportionally more crowded its merits would not be at all enhanced thereby. As it is, it has a distinctive character of its own, half seaside and half inland in its quality; though to speak of it as an inland green would convey far less idea of its nature than to call it seaside without qualification. It is light and sandy of soil, and yet the sand has not quite the lightness of St. Andrews. It has much charm from the beauty of its situation.

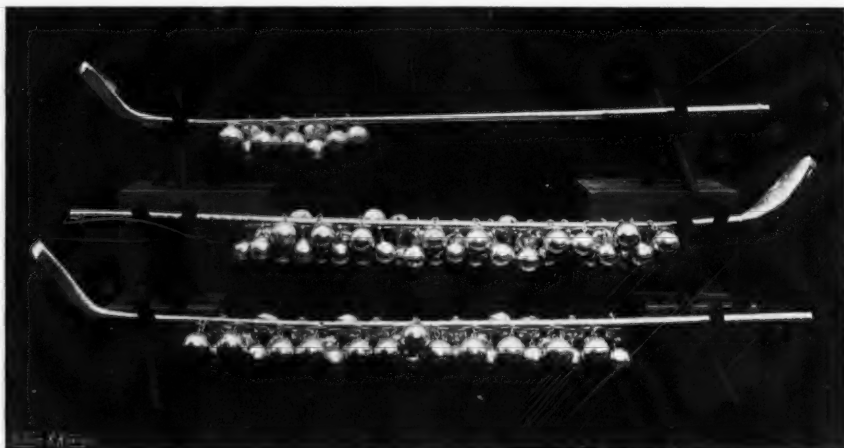
"OLD TOM" GOLFING AGAIN.

It is very pleasant news that "Old Tom" Morris has been on the links again and playing the game he loves, though only for a short round. It is stated to have been the first time that he ever played with a rubber-furred ball, and also that, after playing with it, he sagely reserved judgment as to whether it were a better ball than the old "gutter." Tom is nothing if not conservative in all his views about the Royal and Ancient game—I must make an honourable exception to this statement; he has always been in favour of abolishing stimulants—and I well remember in the eighties, when I used to play with him frequently, and often used the Eclipse ball, which was much in vogue at that time, that he would never have a good word to say for the new inventions. I am not sure that he had ever been even induced to try the "putties," as we called them; but that did not prevent his holding very decided views about them. One of the merits always, and quite justly, claimed for the Eclipse balls was that they flew straighter than the "gutter" balls, though they would not carry as far. They did not take "slice" and "pull" so readily. Nevertheless, it was not at all impossible to get off the course with them, and when this did happen, and Old Tom was your opponent, his chuckles of malicious glee were delightful, and he would say



FIRST MINUTE IN THE RECORD BOOK.

disputants come back to the doctrine upon which the whole discussion of the problem rests. This doctrine can be summed up in the phrase, "It depends upon how you set about to learn the game." And here we have a curious dictum just laid down by Dr. W. G. Grace, who has lately been discussing golf and cricket from the point of view of the cricketer who takes up golf late in life, and when stiffening muscles and an increase of adipose tissue make him less alert than of yore in stopping the passage of the seductive and treacherous "yorker." Dr. W. G. Grace confidently affirms that a first-class cricketer is always hindered by his cricketing methods of playing a ball from



PRESENTATION CLUBS OF EDINBURGH MAGISTRATES

achieving that amount of distinction on the links that he has earned through many years on the cricket ground. "The cricketer," says Dr. Grace, "is at a disadvantage compared with the man of equal type who is not a cricketer when it comes to golf." An analysis of the dictum seems to show that this opinion is based on the fact that in both national games the styles of play needed are radically different. The swing of the golf club is a steady rhythmical movement against a "dead" ball; the swing of the cricket bat is governed by the flight, spin and rebound of a "live" ball. The positions of ball and player in the two games are suggestively reversed. It is the golfer by his swing of the club that controls the flight and direction of the ball; it is the bowler at cricket by his skilled manipulation of pace and distance who exacts from the cricketer a grip of the bat and a swing which are, in the varied circumstances of the moment, in a constant process of fluctuating change.

"Eh, but I'm told they 'putties' 'll never gae aff the line. It canna' surely be a 'putty'!"

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

There was rather a tragic match, with what turned out to be a farcical dénouement, played last week at Mitcham in connection with the London Professional Golfers' Foursomes Tournament. J. Turner and R. McKenzie were playing against A. Baker and W. Philpot. The former were six down at the end of the first round, still six down with only nine holes left for play, and yet they eventually won the match by a hole. This was very gallant work on their part, and very tragic for the losers, for the idea of both parties was that they had been drawn to play each other in the second round of the tournament. Subsequently it was discovered that this was altogether a mistake, that not only had they not been drawn against each other, but that the draw did not take place till the evening of the day on which they played the match. After so splendid a victory the winners must have appreciated the brevity of the step from the sublime to the ridiculous.

HORACE HUTCHINSON.

THE GOSPEL OF MEDIOCRITY.

A DISCUSSION often takes place, not only as to whether golf and cricket go well in double harness, but whether the player who has been first and foremost a cricketer from his youth upwards can ever learn the game and take the same keen interest in playing it as he was accustomed to feel in playing cricket. Amid the variety of opinions expressed, it is generally found that each and all of the

Hence Dr. Grace is perfectly right in laying stress on the radical difference between the cricket and the golf swing, and especially on the fact that the trained cricketer, coming to golf as a *pis aller* late in life, is most likely, through force of long habit, to bring to the handling of the golf club his old bat grip. And herein lies the initial error that every old cricketer makes when he begins to woo the fickle goddess of golf. Having been imbued with a profound contempt of the golfer's game as "a pottering old man's kind of exercise" while he was in active play in county cricket, the cricketer at last takes up golf with the assured conviction that nothing is so easy in the world as to hit a "dead" ball with a long club. The bat grip, with its strong, resolute, inflexible muscularity, is transferred to the leather of the golf club, and lo! "those that walk in pride" are humbly abased. Dr. Grace seems to show that he has journeyed through this Valley of Tribulation often enough, for the fact that appears to have burned itself into his experience of the two games is this small discrepancy in the methods of gripping the cricket bat and the golf club. The cricket grip is a pronouncedly palm grip, with the right hand turned very much under; and that is just the little point of difference in the variation of error which leads all old cricketers, as Dr. Grace rightly says, to "pull their balls all over the place." But the remedy is not to sit down and to be content with deploring the error of the cricketer's grip as an indurated habit that cannot be eradicated. The true remedy is "to learn an old dog a new trick," by telling him that the elements of the old art must be discarded, and that those of the new game must be acquired under capable instruction at the very outset. If a golfer came and asked Dr. Grace to include him in his cricket team, bringing to the grip of the cricket bat his method of grasping a golf club, would not Dr. Grace hurry him to the nets with half-a-dozen lusty bowlers to pound him for an hour until he saw the distinction in his own self-defence, to say nothing of his wicket, between a cricket bat grip and a golf club grip? In troth he assuredly would; and the same principle holds when the cricketer takes up golf. He should disabuse his mind of the idea that because he has been accustomed to hit a ball all his life his methods are ever likely to bring the same success in golf. He should go to the professional and be taught how to grip the club and stand to the ball. There are many cricketers to-day who excel in both games. There are, for example, Mr. Leslie Balfour-Melville, one of the best cricketers and one of the best golfers Scotland has ever produced; Mr. John Graham, jun., of Hoylake; Lieutenant Cecil Hutchison; and among late recruits, Mr. G. W. Beldam, who has made of the art of golf as painstaking a study as he has acquired undoubted distinction in the complexities of instantaneous photography.

Neither is it a just appreciation of the enjoyment to be extracted from any game to allege, as Dr. Grace alleges, that the moderate golfer obtains as much enjoyment as, or more than, the best player. Such an argument in favour of the condonation of defects of an erroneous or self-taught style can never be presented or accepted seriously. In after-dinner speeches at golf club dinners, or in a far-fetched *jeu d'esprit* hitting off some of the humours of the game, such a thesis is occasionally maintained to evoke a burst of hilarity and amused comment. Dr. Grace is probably no more serious in taking this view of his own golfing imperfections, as well as those of other ex-cricketers who succeed but indifferently in overcoming the difficult technicalities of golf, than the ballad-writers and the after-dinner speakers; but when the tendency is becoming more and more apparent to halt at this "Rest and be Thankful" in the golfer's progress towards learning a better and sounder game, it is just as well to take the opportunity to urge on the other side that it is a radically false philosophy. A scratch player may now and again get out of form and become discontented, but there come many days in his career on the links when he tastes a supreme joy which can never be realised by him who plods with much hard labour in the sterile paths of ineffective mediocrity. It is because the golfer has always something new to learn, some fresh combination of cause and effect to disentangle, some higher ideal in the technique of the game to attain, that he refuses to rest content with the dispiriting fatalism of him who insists upon preaching even to ex-cricketers the cold and drab-grey creed of golfing mediocrity.

A. J. ROBERTSON.

CORRESPONDENCE.

GOLF AND THE WEARING OF GLASSES.

SIR,—Mr. A. J. Robertson, in his admirable article under the above heading, has covered so well most of the leading points in regard to the advantage to golfers in having any defect of vision corrected, that it is

almost presumption on my part to suggest anything further; but perhaps he will not object if I endeavour to amplify one part which he has only just touched upon, and which has an important bearing on the question. He only refers casually to the necessity for accurately judging distances. To measure distance with any degree of certainty, binocular vision is absolutely necessary. The man who attempts to do it with one eye only will never attain to any degree of skill.

If the two eyes are not exactly alike, one of them, the better of the two, will become the master eye, and will unconsciously do all the work. It will be seen from this that the importance of the actual balance of the two eyes cannot be over-estimated; in fact, I will make bold to say that the man with a decreased amount of visual acuteness in both eyes, if the error is equal, will beat the man who has one perfect eye and one defective in any contest as to measuring distances. As Mr. Robertson says, ordinary eyeglasses are not sufficient for golfers. A very wide angle of vision is necessary to good play, and this can only be obtained with large glasses fitting closely to the eyes. The best method to secure close fitting is to use the Zonal lenses which are worked on surfaces which have a deep concave base to commence with; by this means the magnifying lenses necessary to correct hypermetropia in its various forms can still be supplied with a hollow front to fit closely. These remarks apply only in a lesser degree to billiard

spectacles, because the player, generally stooping low to sight his stroke, looks through the upper edge of his glasses, and, in consequence, frequently gets a different result than when looking through the centre for ordinary purposes.—JAMES AITCHISON.



THE COMPANY'S OLDEST MEDAL.

CORRESPONDENCE.

FIELD AND PLACE NAMES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In reply to your correspondent "G. Ashburnham" in last week's number, asking the meaning and derivation of the word "spong," Ogilvie's Imperial Dictionary gives the meaning as "A projection of land; an irregular, projecting part of a field," and adds "obsolete or provincial English." There is such a piece between fields here, on my own property, in East Suffolk, always called "the spong." So much for the meaning; but I have been unable to find the derivation. Perhaps some other reader of COUNTRY LIFE can enlighten us.—R. ELIAS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In reply to your correspondent "G. Ashburnham" respecting the derivation or meaning of the word "the spong," as applied to the name of a field. On referring to "Forby's Vocabulary of East Anglia," Vol. II., page 230, I find the following: "Spong—a long narrow strip of enclosed land, such as a strong, active fellow might clear in a 'spang' or leap. Spong-water is a narrow streamlet; and so from Isl, spenna, extendere."—H. M. WILKIN.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The word "spong" is generic in this part of Suffolk for a narrow strip of meadow. It is probably a corruption of the Anglo-Saxon "spon," which means a "sliver" or "shaving." We have also the word "queech," which signifies a corner cut off a field and planted with timber; I cannot derive this.—CHARLES TERRY, Stowmarket.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I wonder if any of your readers can suggest the origin of Knockhundred Row, the name of a small street in this town.—F. TATCHELL, Midhurst Vicarage, Sussex.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Since writing my first letter to you I have been informed by the rector of the parish in which the field "Cheffalongs" is situated that on the tithe map it is spelt "Cheffalawns." As I said before, spelling on old maps is very haphazard, and your correspondent Mr. E. G. Osborne may still be right in his derivation.—R. B.

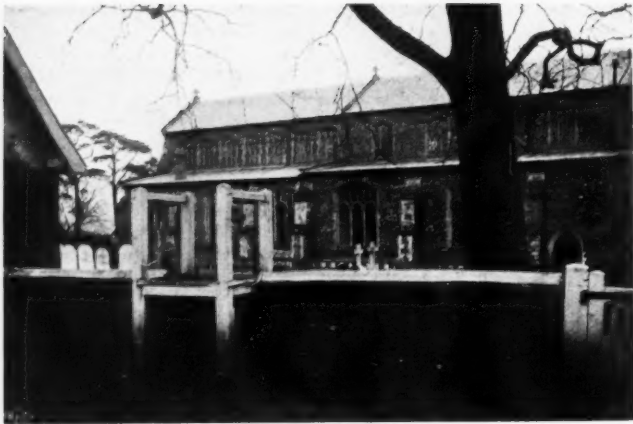
[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I wonder if any of your readers can explain the derivation of this field name, "The Cizdens." It describes two long grass fields in a valley with long hanging wood on either side. It is a very old name on the Ordnance Map and very peculiar. Perhaps Mr. Chambers may enlighten me from among his large stock of country names.—A. F. D. SHEARBURN.

MOCK SUNS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I was very interested in the letter, "A Mock Sun," in your issue of January 12th, for on Friday, January 4th, about three o'clock, I was driving on the Cotswold Hills, and saw what appeared to be a halo round the sun, but in the circle just parallel to the sun it was exactly like a bright rainbow, and so it remained for more than half-an-hour. The terrible news from Jamaica makes me wonder whether the extraordinary sight of January 4th could be a forerunner of this eruption. No one I have asked had ever seen such a sight before, though one man says he remembers an old carter years ago describing a similar sight.—GLOUCESTERSHIRE.



OLD MOUNTING-BLOCK.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—There are still a few places in rural England which possess relics of the days when Darby and Joan rode pillion-wise to church, and in the accompanying photograph is shown an old-time "jossing-post" adjoining the churchyard of Wingfield, Suffolk. In many cases these "jossing" or "mounting" blocks were constructed of stone similar to that at Reydon, in the same county, but the Wingfield example consists of a small flight of wooden steps leading from the churchyard, up and down which, no doubt, has trod many a jaunty bride of long ago.—E. BOND.

THE BLACK-HEADED GULL.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—We note in your issue of the 12th inst. an article on "Legislation and the Black-headed Gull." While agreeing in the main with your argument respecting the untrustworthiness of many observers, and also with your remarks respecting the need for more careful and exhaustive reports on the economy of our British birds, we would like to point out to you that we do not purpose drawing our conclusions solely from the replies received to the circular issued by us. The questions contained in the circular were put with the view of ascertaining from scientific and field naturalists whether any systematic investigations respecting the food of this bird had been made in their districts, and also with the object of obtaining the opinions of our local farmers and fishermen respecting the bird generally. We are, and have been for some time, conducting personal investigations and examinations, and these will, when completed, enable us to report fully to the Cumberland County Council as to the nature of the food of *Larus ridibundus* in our area.—D. LOSH THORPE, LINNEUS E. HOPE.

SPARROW SHAMMING DEATH.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I witnessed rather a curious thing a day or two ago that, I think, may interest your readers. I was walking to my club in Malvern, when I saw in the distance a mongrel fox-terrier puppy playing with something in the middle of the road, and as I got nearer I saw that this something was a sparrow; so I hurried up, either to rescue it, or, if need be, to put the poor thing out of its misery. In the meantime, the dog kept nosing it and rolling it over, but before I got up the dog seemed satisfied that he had accomplished his purpose, viz., killed the sparrow. When I arrived I found the bird lying on its side, to all appearance dead. To make sure I turned it up on to its feet with my umbrella. To my utter surprise it was off in a moment, flying right over the top of the club-house. I could only conclude that it had been deliberately "playing possum" while it thought itself in the dog's power. It is quite certain that it had not been really injured. I have never before come across a case of a bird shamming death in this way, and I am much interested to know if any of your numerous readers have met with a similar instance.—FREDERIC HOOKHAM.

HOMING INSTINCT IN GREENFINCH.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—It may be of interest to some of your readers to hear that a pigeon is not the only bird which is able to find its way home from a distance. At the

beginning of the last Christmas holidays I caught a cock greenfinch, which I put with two others in a large cage. One day last week I gave this bird to a schoolfellow who lives about two miles from my home. It escaped from his cage and returned the same afternoon. On entering the outhouse in which the cage was kept, I found the bird sitting on the cage, and he allowed me to catch him and put him back with his mates. I am convinced that it was the same bird owing to certain tail feathers being missing, and my schoolfellow agrees with me. I should like to know if any other instance is known of a wild bird voluntarily returning to captivity in this manner.—JOHN RICHARDS KING.

A PAIR OF CRANES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I enclose a photograph of a pair of crowned or Balearic cranes from Africa, well-grown birds which stand to the top of their crests a trifle over 4ft. high. The male bird is rather the larger and heavier of the two; he is on the right of the photograph (on the other bird's left), in a position which shows the wattle on his throat clearly. The attitude of the birds is very characteristic—the alert circumspection with which they always walk, with an air of having a keen interest in everything, and a determination not to be taken advantage of. They are, indeed, wary birds, suspicious in captivity and in their wild state very difficult to approach. They eat almost anything and, like, I believe, all the cranes, are occasionally seized with a desire to dance,



when they perform ridiculous evolutions with the utmost solemnity, bowing, pirouetting and scraping to one another like a couple of bishops who have taken to playing clown. For all the deliberateness of their gait under ordinary circumstances, they can travel on foot at a tremendous pace when there is anything worth travelling for.—GRUS.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN GOATS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—A short time ago, on December 2nd last year, you reviewed in your "Literary Notes" Mr. Hornaday's book "Camp Fires in the Canadian Rockies," which dealt particularly with the Rocky Mountain goat, and it occurs to me that the enclosed photograph of some of these animals taken in Bronx Park Zoological Gardens will be of interest to your readers.—F. G. A.



TREE-CLIMBING DOGS.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—I should like to add one to your occasional anecdotes of tree-climbing dogs. While on a walk on snow-shoes in New Hampshire, we tracked a porcupine to a balsam fir in which it had taken refuge. My Scottish terrier climbed the tree, pulling herself up from branch to branch to a height of

about 7ft., where a space of bare trunk separated her from the porcupine, who had watched her progress with evident alarm. The terrier made several ineffectual attempts to scale the smooth bark, and finally jumped down into the snow. This little dog and her mate, now dead, though enthusiastic fire-worshippers at home, never sat near the bonfires built at luncheon or teatime on winter walks, but dug holes in the snow at a little distance, in which they curled themselves up, after the manner of their primitive ancestors.—SUSAN CABOT.